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THE

ROUND

TABLE

**A QUARTERLY REVIEW OF THE POLITICS
OF THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH**

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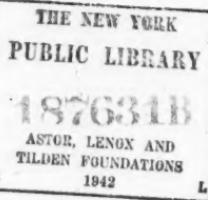
THE ROUND TABLE

A QUARTERLY REVIEW OF THE POLITICS OF
THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH

Volume XXXI

DECEMBER 1940 TO SEPTEMBER 1941

London: MACMILLAN & CO., LTD.



THE ROUND TABLE is a co-operative enterprise conducted by people who dwell in the different parts of the British Commonwealth, and whose aim is to publish once a quarter a comprehensive review of imperial politics, free from the bias of local party issues. To this is added a careful and impartial treatment of outstanding international problems that affect the nations of the Commonwealth. The affairs of THE ROUND TABLE in each portion of the Commonwealth are in the hands of local residents, who are responsible for all articles on the politics of their own country. It is hoped that in this way THE ROUND TABLE serves to reflect the current opinions of all parts about imperial problems, and at the same time to present a survey of them as a whole, in the light of changing world conditions.

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No. 121. December 1940 Price 5/-

London: MACMILLAN & CO., LTD.

Printed in Great Britain and entered as second-class matter March 15th, 1929, at the Post Office at Boston, Mass., under the Act of March 3rd, 1879 (Sec. 397, P.L. and R.).

LIONEL HICHENS

LIONEL HICHENS, affectionately known as "Nel", was born on May 1, 1874. He was in 'Trant's' House at Winchester from 1887 to 1893 and at New College, Oxford, from 1893 to 1897. He read "Greats" and rowed for his College at the head of the river. Having taken his degree and studied languages in France and Germany he became a master at Sherborne. Popular at once with boys and colleagues, he seemed, like so many others of his type and training, to have found his life work in a schoolmaster's career. And many of his Oxford contemporaries may have looked for no more than that in the tall, handsome, athletic, very modest, rather shy New College Commoner. But the few who had got behind his reserve and become his intimate friends knew better. They had discovered that Nel Hichens was not only an ideal companion but a man of such exceptional force of character that, fine as his work might be at a Public School, he was bound, sooner or later, to be needed in a wider field.

The call came soon; for to public-spirited young Englishmen of that generation the blunders and disasters which marked the earlier stages of the South African War made the same direct appeal as graver crises were to make in 1914 and 1939. In the "black week" of the autumn of 1899 Hichens enlisted, with two of his New College friends, as a private in the cyclist section organised by the Inns of Court and attached to the City Imperial Volunteers; and in due course he found himself at Orange River camp as a despatch rider under General Settle who, with a column of Orpen's Horse, Australian artillery and other units, was charged with the task of pacifying the country on both banks of the river down to the sea. Hichens soon had a chance of proving his mettle. A well-known Canadian, Colonel Sam Hughes, was chief intelligence officer on Settle's staff, and he picked out Private Hichens and

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one or two others for a typically daring venture. Pushing several days' march ahead of the column, they crossed the Orange River at Uppington and bluffed a Boer commando, which mistook the handful of men for the advance guard of a substantial force, out of the town. Hughes then sent Hichens on two journeys, the first by himself, to obtain transport and supplies of wheat in readiness for the arrival of Orpen's Horse at Uppington. It was a troublesome little job, but the young schoolmaster handled it as competently and methodically as if he had been trained in business or a bank. At the same first test and in the same small field, as it happened, he revealed another of the gifts he had been born with. The war had meant the collapse of all civil authority in this area. The native Bastaards or Griquas had no one to settle their disputes. When they saw Hichens they at once appealed to him to act as judge between them as if he were a magistrate. He agreed, and the sureness of touch and sense of humour with which he unravelled the tangles, mostly matrimonial, which were spread before him would have done credit to an experienced district officer.

The cyclists were then ordered to rejoin their regiment at Bloemfontein. When they got there, they found that the C.I.V. had marched some days before with Sir Ian Hamilton's column* to a position on the right flank of Lord Roberts's main advance on the Transvaal. The cyclists started in company with sundry other details, but with no other guide than the trail which the column had left on the veld. They overtook their regiment in the middle of the Sand River fight. They then marched with the column to the great concentration at Kroonstadt. Transferred from the right flank to the left, the column forded the Vaal at Parys drift, and fought on the ground near Florida where the Jameson raiders had surrendered. They were then moved to a camp five miles to the north of Johannesburg. One of Hichens's two friends was sent from Florida by Ian Hamilton with a despatch for Lord Roberts at Orange Grove. The column then marched on

* Mr. Winston Churchill was with the column and described its operations in *Ian Hamilton's Column* (London, 1902).

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Pretoria, leaving Hichens and his other friend in the abandoned camp to pick up the despatch rider and bring him along. He soon rejoined them, and the trio caught up the column just in time to take part in the entry into Pretoria next day. That evening they marched with Ian Hamilton's column to camp at Irene some ten miles south of Pretoria, where General Smuts now has his home.

For the moment a strangely mistaken idea prevailed that the war was ended with the occupation of the capital. Hichens and his two friends were personally given their discharge by Lord Roberts and told that they could make their way as best they could to Cape Town. After various adventures, partly on their cycles and partly by rail, they reached it and sailed for home. Hichens's mother and invalid brother, were in Egypt, and Hichens at once went out to join them. He had not been there long when Lord Cromer appointed him to a post in the Egyptian Service in the Ministry of Finance.

Meantime the South African War had by no means come to an end. It had reached, indeed, its most difficult stage when in 1901 Lord Milner, despite the unbroken spirit and irrepressible activity of the Boer commandos, set himself to begin the task of restoring within the limits of effective British occupation, the damage done by war to the two annexed Republics. For this purpose he gathered about him the group of young men, mostly from Oxford, who were given the nickname of Milner's *Kindergarten*. Among them were two of those three ex-privates of the C.I.V. To start the work of municipal reconstruction in Johannesburg, still encircled by military outposts, Milner selected a dozen of its residents as a Town Council, and amazed them by offering the appointment of Town Treasurer to Hichens, whose sole financial experience was what he might have gleaned in the nine months he had now served in the Ministry of Finance at Cairo. Hichens at once accepted the post, and the Town Council soon found that the young untrained man whom Milner had given them was exactly the kind of treasurer they needed. They presently sent him to England to raise a loan in seven figures which he successfully

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negotiated with a London bank. The loan when issued was left for the most part in the hands of the underwriters. The Council, persuaded by Hichens, had accepted the most stringent provision for a sinking fund. In after years this loan came to rank as one of the best gilt-edged securities on the British market.

On May 31, 1902, the Peace of Vereeniging was signed, and before long Kitchener and the armies had departed, and Milner was in sole command of the annexed Republics, now proclaimed Crown Colonies. The work he did in the next two years in healing the wounds of war and preparing the ground for the unification of South Africa was the greatest and most exhausting of his life; and one of his instruments was the *Kinder-garten*. Hichens's share in the work was again financial. He was appointed Colonial Treasurer of the Transvaal and also, later on, Treasurer of the Inter-Colonial Council of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony. Those were no easy posts, for money was short, harvests bad, and the cost of resettlement and reconstruction very heavy; nor was the task made lighter by the fact that, as a member of the Crown Colony Government, he had no such body of public opinion at his back as Chancellors of the Exchequer can command and was dealing, moreover, with a people who had just lost a war and with it their long-cherished freedom. But on both the human and technical sides of his work Hichens was at his best. When Crown Colony Government gave place to Responsible Government and Generals Botha and Smuts took office at the beginning of 1907, they found at their disposal substantial balances created by the firm and prudent policy of the ex-Treasurer. This chapter of Hichens's life characteristically closed with his refusal to accept the financial compensation offered by the Colonial Office for the termination of his official duties.

Back in England, Hichens found himself for a time with nothing to do. For months he was living with his mother at Falmouth, chafing at his idleness, but never complaining. Before long, however, he was at work again. In 1907-08 he

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went to India as a member of the Royal Commission on Decentralisation, which was concerned with the intricate administrative question of the relations, particularly in finance, between the central and provincial governments. In 1909 he revisited South Africa as chairman of a board of enquiry into the public service of Southern Rhodesia. On this occasion, incidentally, he initiated steps for the preservation of the Zimbabwe ruins. In 1910 he was appointed chairman of the old-established shipbuilding firm of Cammell Laird and Co., Ltd., and here he found the work that was to command the best part of his mind and energy for the rest of his life. At that moment the famous old firm was in desperate straits—it had seemed, indeed, that it might have to close down—but under his vigorous control the prospect of so serious an injury not only to the workpeople of Merseyside but to the potential war-equipment of the nation was soon fast disappearing. By 1914 all danger of collapse was over; the firm was on solid ground again.

To Hichens, now 40 years old, but still full of youthful vigour, the call of his country in 1914 was the same as the call of 1899; and his intimate friends were afraid he would think it his duty to "join up" again as a soldier. He would certainly have done so if it had been a matter of inclination only; nor was this the sort of subject on which he could be argued with. In the end his own judgment convinced him that he could not surrender his responsibility as one of the key men in the production of ships and guns and shells for the war. So he played his part, a leading part, in the vast expansion of the armament industry needed to win the war. He became chairman of the Central Council of the Association of Controlled Firms, an appointment which showed how much he enjoyed the confidence of his fellow industrialists. In the same connection he and another old member of the South African *Kindergarten* were asked in the winter of 1915 by Mr. Lloyd George, then Minister of Munitions, to go out to Canada. Then, as now, munitions made in Canada were an important addition to the British output, but the organisation

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of the Canadian supply was unsatisfactory, and it was the object of the mission to try to put it right. It was a difficult and delicate task since the existing Shell Committee was the creation of Sam Hughes, now Minister of Militia and Defence, and he was proud of it. Fortunately he had not forgotten those days on the Orange River when Private Hichens had won his lasting respect and regard, and the successful result of the negotiations was mainly due to Hichens's irresistible technique—a combination of conciliation, frankness, courtesy and complete firmness. Sam Hughes ultimately agreed to the extinction of the Shell Committee and its replacement by a body called the Imperial Munitions Board with Mr. (afterwards Sir) Joseph Flavelle as Chairman and Mr. (afterwards Sir) Charles Gordon as Deputy Chairman. This Board built up a great and efficient organisation and spent £250 millions in the course of the war.

Hichens was deeply impressed by the effect of the war on the attitude of the workers to their work. In peace they had worked at the worst because they could not otherwise keep themselves and their families alive, at the best to satisfy an individual's pride in his job. But in war they had been working with a new and real desire to serve the needs of the community. Industry had come to be regarded as national service. To Hichens that seemed the key to economic progress. He did not take it to mean that industry should be nationalised. On the contrary he feared that state control would tend to deaden the sense of individual duty, blunt the spur to individual effort, to which he pinned his faith. He was a remarkably good speaker, and during the post-war period of industrial tension he was often on the platform. He was in personal contact, too, with Labour leaders who rarely, if ever, before had come to know a "captain of industry" whose ideals were at root so much the same as their own. In those discussions and in all his talk with friends and colleagues—and the personal influence he exerted in this way was considerable—Hichens preached from the simple text that economic

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principles and institutions, however important, were a secondary matter, that the only way to raise the general standard of living was for all those who were engaged in industry, from the chairman and the manager to the humblest mechanic, to work their hardest, and that they would only work their hardest if they felt it to be their duty to do so. "The industrial problem", he said in a lecture at Swanwick in 1919, "is primarily a moral one. . . . If we have rights, we also have duties. . . . In the industrial world our duty clearly is to regard our work as the service which we render to the rest of the community, and it is obvious that we should give, not grudgingly or of necessity, but in full measure."

The "new spirit in industry" is a more familiar phrase to-day than it was when Hichens used it twenty years ago; and the moral climate of the post-war world, in its earlier years at any rate, did not favour the growth of idealism in any field of life. It was a time, moreover, of renewed industrial depression. After the war "boom" came the great peace "slump"; and it was no use asking men to work their hardest when they had no work to do. Hichens himself believed that the depression would have been less severe if the opportunity had been taken immediately after the war to reduce the weight of public debt by a capital levy—a course which he had strongly favoured at the time. As it was, the only chance of recovery for the industries with which Hichens was concerned was "rationalisation", a painful process of contraction and merging which Hichens faced unflinchingly, refusing to weigh an individual's interest or a firm's prestige against the general advantage, contemptuously brushing aside in his own case an offer of "compensation" which most men would have thought fair. But, if in those difficult days the moral revolution Hichens preached seemed slow in coming, there was one element in it which could operate at any time and in any conditions. The conception of industry as national service implied that the personnel of any industry had not only a duty to the community, but a duty to each other as fellow-servants of the community, and his own share in that duty Hichens never forgot. He was

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a master of administrative organisation, but, just as morals mattered more to him than institutions, so men mattered more than the machine. Nor was the care he took for the welfare of his employees a cold impersonal business. He knew the men and respected them. Often in recent months, after visiting Merseyside, he would talk of the high spirit of the workers there, their pluckiness under air-attack, their tough confidence in victory. And in this field at any rate, though he may not have known it, he had his reward. In shipyards far from the Mersey men have been heard to say that he was a lucky chap who got a job at Cammell Laird's; and, when Hichens died, at least nine in every ten of those who filled the church for his memorial service at Birkenhead were workmen from the yard.

Hichens's industrial work was not confined to Cammell Laird's. He was vice-chairman of the Metropolitan-Cammell Carriage Wagon and Finance Company and a director of the English Steel Corporation, of the Commonwealth Trust Company, of the L.N.W.R., and, after its merger, of the L.M.S. As a member for more than twenty years of the executive committee of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust he took a leading part in its activities in settling unemployed workers on the land and in encouraging the love and practice of music in this country. He served, moreover, on the Government Committee on the National Debt in 1924, and on the Royal Commissions on Licensing and on Lotteries and Betting appointed in 1929 and 1932. And he had many other interests. Nothing pleased him more than his election as one of the Fellows of Winchester College who, with the Warden, constitute its governing body, and none of his colleagues was more regular in attendance at its meetings or took more trouble over its business. He was specially concerned with the plans for the memorial to Wykehamists who had died in the war, the outcome of which was Sir Herbert Baker's cloister, regarded by many as the most beautiful of all the war memorials in England. Oxford, too, never lost her hold on him—as the subscription lists to the University Appeal, the Preservation

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Trust and the New College New Library Fund bear material witness. It was near Oxford, at North Aston, that he chose to make his home from 1929 onwards, and, if he fought shy of Senior Common Rooms, he could not resist a request from undergraduates to come and talk to them about his experience of imperial problems or his industrial ideals. He was "the guest of the evening" at the first meeting of the now well-known Raleigh Club in 1913, and the first of the many distinguished men who have become its honorary members. This interest in the academic world was not confined to Winchester and Oxford. Hichens gave a great deal of his time and energy to Birkbeck College, that part of the University of London which normally specialises in giving opportunities of graduate and post-graduate evening work to students who earn their living in various professions during the day. As the Chairman of Governors from 1927 till his death he was largely responsible for the notable progress of the College during that period, and in particular for planning and initiating the construction of new and worthier College buildings on the London University site in Bloomsbury. He had a hand, also, in the rebuilding of Church House, Westminster, for which Sir Herbert Baker, an old friend from South African days, was again the architect.

But the chief of all these side-interests, so to speak, in Hichens's life was the Round Table. He was one of its original members, since the British Round Table group, the father of similar groups in the Dominions, was simply the major part of the South African *Kindergarten*, sitting now in London at a table broadened and made a little rounder by the enlistment of one or two recruits. Often at its head sat the old masters of the *Kindergarten*, Lord Milner and his successor, Lord Selborne, close friends and allies of Hichens to the end; and the *Kindergarten*'s study of the problems of union in South Africa passed naturally into the Round Table's study of the problems of the British Commonwealth as a whole. Other members of the group may have been more vocal, but none had a greater influence than Hichens in its general discussions or in planning

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the contents of its journal; for he never criticised for the sake of criticism, he was quick to appreciate the strength of an opinion he did not share, and he had an infallible instinct for detecting what really mattered. It is hard, indeed, for the surviving members of the British group to think of the Round Table with that empty chair. "This ironmaster", writes one of them, "was from the first the pivot on which our work together turned, a steel rod of exquisite temper, revolving firmly and quietly, as an axle fulfilling its purpose should."

If anyone deserved domestic happiness it was this selfless servant of the public weal, and he was granted it in full. His devotion to his mother, who was widowed before he was born, was one of the loveliest things in his life; and, not long before she died, he found in Hermione Lyttleton a wife who shared, almost like a twin, his qualities and ideals. They had three sons and three daughters. Life at North Aston was a perfect example of the English family life which has done so much to make the history of England. Loving the English country-side and all its ways, Hichens was in the fullest sense "at home" in it, and every hour he could snatch from business in London or the North was spent at North Aston. His friends will remember him best, perhaps, as they saw him there at week-ends during this war—cheerfully discussing the war-news over his pipe, reading the lessons in the parish church, putting on his uniform for a march in the ranks of the Home Guard, wielding a scythe in the paddock or "digging for victory" in the potato patch in old flannel trousers and open shirt, or just sitting in the sun on the lawn with his children in a circle round him. It was immediately after such a peaceful and utterly happy week-end that he was struck down. Early in the evening of Monday, October 14, a bomb fell right through the house in which he had taken up his quarters near his London office, and he and his six companions were instantly killed.

Hichens was a modest man, perhaps too modest. He had

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plenty of self-confidence, but he was quite incapable of elbowing his way into high places. And that, maybe, is the reason why he never had the real great chance he should have had. For he possessed in unusual measure the gifts which qualify a man to lead his fellow men. He was the sort of man from whom other men, however gifted they too might be in their own ways, would willingly take their orders in a time of difficulty or danger. It was not only his human understanding, his level-headed judgment of men and things, his sanity: it was, above all else, his steadfastness. Most of us hope that we may be able to meet whatever adversity may befall us with courage and endure it to the end. But we only hope. Anyone who knew Hichens realised that in his case it was a certainty. For that reason he was to all about him, to use a familiar but very appropriate phrase, "a tower of strength".

Interwoven with his steadfastness was an unfaltering sincerity. He had, to quote a friend once more, an "infallible and compelling instinct as to fair or unfair, straight or unstraight, right or wrong", and what that instinct told him he never evaded or concealed. He was always utterly frank. There could never be any question where he stood or what he meant. He judged everything from the high standard which governed his whole life; and he could be very blunt if need be. He could not put up with meanness or double-dealing or disloyalty. But he was never censorious or ungenerous, still less ungentle. Yet in all his austerity, his majestic strength of character, there was not the faintest flavour of the puritan or prig. He was completely human. He liked all sorts of people and enjoyed all the good things of life. He had a swift and merry sense of humour. He was, indeed, as much the perfect companion in sunshine as on a cloudy day. But always behind his charm and cheeriness was that unshakable strength. That is what made his friendship such a matchless treasure. His friends came away from seeing him not only happier but braver. For he did more than make them feel that he cared for them and was deeply interested in their life and work: in some mysterious way he put something of his own strength into them.

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What they think about him may, perhaps, be summed up by saying that his were the qualities which they would like their sons to have, and his the character they hope an Englishman stands for in the world, and that mainly because, in the full strength of both words, he was an honest man

Who, when great trials come,
Nor seeks nor shuns them, but doth calmly stay
Till he the thing and the example weigh . . .

Whom none can work or woo
To use in anything a trick or sleight,
For above all things he abhors deceit;
His words and works and fashion too
All of a piece, and all are clear and straight.

Who never melts or thaws
At close temptations: when the day is done
His goodness sets not, but in dark can run.

THE SECOND WINTER

THE second winter of the war finds us in a much less favourable position than was so over-confidently expected a year ago. By now, it was hoped, a German "break-through" on the French front would have been proved to be impossible, and the French and British armies would be preparing for a combined offensive in 1941 against a Germany whose powers of resistance would have been seriously impaired by the rigours of a second winter under our blockade. Italy, it was thought, confronted by the combined French and British fleets, with numerous bases at their command, and by the menace of a joint attack on Libya from Tunis and Egypt, might continue to keep out of the arena. Before the year was more than half-way through those expectations were belied. The fall of France transformed the situation. Within a few weeks the German occupation of the northern and western coasts of Europe had been extended to the Pyrenees, and the German army was preparing for the invasion of England. The British army and air force no longer had any foothold on the Continent. Not only had the German attack on our sea communications by submarine and aircraft been immensely facilitated by the acquisition of Atlantic bases, but the pressure of our blockade on Germany had been greatly eased by the opportunities of despoiling the countries in German occupation.* Italy, moreover, had seized the chance, as it seemed to her, of sharing at little cost in the imminent victory, and her entry into the war together with France's withdrawal from it reversed the balance of force and strategic advantage in the Mediterranean. Egypt and the Suez Canal were in danger.

But, if our position now is much worse than was hoped a year ago, it is much better than was feared six months ago. The Battle of Britain offset the Battle of France. Our victory

* On this point, see pp. 81-86 below.

THE SECOND WINTER

in the air was as great as the German victory on land, and it was won against odds. Its effects were immediate and far-reaching. The establishment of British air mastery by day over Britain and its territorial waters thwarted, for the time being at least, the German project of invasion—the only project that offered a chance of a quick end to the war—and with the damage done to the *Luftwaffe* went the damage done to German morale by the first defeat which Hitler had encountered, the first miscalculation in his time-table of promised victories. Britain, on the other hand, obtained the breathing-space she desperately needed. Only locally and slightly damaged, the great machine of armament production worked on at increasing speed. On the high seas our merchant-shipping was still exposed to serious hazard, but within the range of the R.A.F. it was relatively safe. As the critical weeks went by, it was possible to strengthen substantially our forces in the Eastern Mediterranean. The danger of the Italian threat to Egypt became far less acute. Secure for the time being behind this Middle-Eastern front, the work of mobilising and co-ordinating the military and economic resources of all the Empire south and east of Suez was vigorously continued. Few incidents of the last few months have been more significant in their different ways than the opening of the Delhi Conference and the meeting of General Smuts and Mr. Eden at Khartum. In fine, the Battle of Britain had given the whole Commonwealth the thing it most needed to inspire a “reasonable confidence” in ultimate victory—time.

Even more important on a long view than the effect of the Battle of Britain on the belligerents was its effect on the neutrals, especially the United States. Before the fall of France, American opinion, though the great bulk of it was warmly sympathetic to the Allied cause, was still deeply influenced by the old tradition of isolationism and of suspicion of Britain, hardened by all that has happened since 1914. But the French *débâcle* gave America a more violent shock than anything that has occurred in Europe since the days of George III. It was widely believed that Britain was doomed to suffer France's

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fate. There was genuine fear that Hitler, swiftly mobilising all the resources of conquered Europe, would be able to enforce his will on America before she was sufficiently armed to defend herself. Then came the Battle of Britain; and, when it had been fought and won, two new ideas had taken a firm hold on the American mind. First the American people had acquired a new respect for the British people. The heroism of the R.A.F. and the fortitude of the civil population in London and other cities under air-bombardment seem to have impressed Americans even more than they did Englishmen. And this new respect was enhanced and warmed by the recognition that Britain had not been fighting only her own battle but America's too. The courage and skill which had kept Hitler out of London had kept his shadow from lengthening as far as Washington. Britain, and Britain alone, had stood between America and the extreme of peril, if not actual disaster. It had long been evident on this side of the Atlantic that the British Commonwealth, with all its varied resources, could not win this war, nor ever, indeed, in the future be secure against a powerful combination in Continental Europe, without America's help. The converse of this was now apparent. America realised that she likewise was not secure if the east coast of the Atlantic were dominated by a potential enemy. Isolationism now seemed an ostrich policy. Self-interest, self-defence, to put it no higher, demanded the maximum effort America could make to help in the defence of the Allies' position in Europe and West Africa. It was much the same in the Pacific. The Japanese challenge lighted up the fact, obscured by past misunderstandings and mistakes, that not only the long-range policies of the British Commonwealth and the United States but their immediate interests were identical. That was the second new idea—the mutual interdependence of the two great democratic societies. It is more, indeed, than an idea. It is a fact, and a fact of vast consequence for the future of the world.

The change in American opinion was quickly reflected in action. The acquisition of strategic bases on British soil in the

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West Atlantic and the Caribbean, the transference of American destroyers to the British Navy, the establishment of a joint defence board for the United States and Canada, the further speeding-up of armaments production and the permission accorded to the British Government to purchase as much as 50 per cent. of the total output—all this made it abundantly clear that the American people were now allied with the peoples of the British Commonwealth in everything but actual fighting. Significant, too, was the sharp tone of American comment on the Allied mischance at Dakar and the American Government's protest against Spain's unilateral action at Tangier—significant because Dakar and Tangier are key-points on what is now the eastern frontier of American defence.

The United States were not the only neutral country whose attitude to the war was affected by the Battle of Britain. There has been a marked reaction in the Near East. Turkey's stubborn loyalty to her engagements has been stiffened. Still more striking, Greece has defied the Axis to the point of war. Despite the grim fate of Norway, Holland, Belgium and France, despite the obvious fact that, whatever aid she might obtain from Britain on sea and in the air, the despatch of large British land forces from Egypt would be precisely the strategic blunder that the Axis hoped for, and despite their own weakness in numbers and equipment, the Greek people decided to fight Italy, even though it would mean, sooner or later, her fighting Italy's far more powerful partner too. That choice was mainly prompted by the passion for freedom and the sheer courage which made Greece glorious in the dawn of Europe's history. As an English poet has said, "Beside her stand the Immortals". But General Metaxas and his colleagues, who have already shown their high capacity in action, may well have hoped that their position would never be as desperate as that of Leonidas at Thermopylae. They had doubtless marked the gradual change in the strategic situation in the Mediterranean since the dark days of the summer. And which side Greece *wanted* to win has never been in doubt. Greek

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brotherhood-in-arms with Britain, indeed, is a tribute to the character of British policy for a century past. It is significant that the smaller nations of the Mediterranean prefer at very serious risk to back the British rather than the Axis cause. They hold, as we do, that outside territorial waters the Mediterranean is nobody's *mare nostrum*: that it belongs in the first place to all the peoples on its shores, including those of its north-eastern extension, the Black Sea—Spain, France, Italy, Yugoslavia, Albania, Greece, Bulgaria, Rumania, Russia, Turkey, the seaboard Arabs, Egypt, the inhabitants of the British Crown Colonies and of mandated Palestine, the peoples of the French and Italian North African provinces, and Morocco—and that, in the second place, the security and freedom of the Mediterranean are all the world's concern because it is one of its most important and frequented sea-ways. That Britain has so long guarded its doorways at each end has not galled those weaker nations. For British sea-power in the Mediterranean since 1815 has never been used for aggression or aggrandisement: it has only been used to keep its waters free and safe for the ships of every sea-going nation. The British flag flying over our strategic bases has long ceased to be, if it ever was, the symbol of a selfish imperialism. The vital interest of the British Commonwealth in the Mediterranean does not clash with that of any peace-loving people; nor have we ever claimed, or had the power to exert, an exclusive control of it. The safety of the Mediterranean, it may be said again, is all the world's affair. It is one of those areas to which in any stable system of international co-operation and security the principle of the mandate would naturally apply.

The Mediterranean, however, though of the greatest strategic importance, is not the decisive theatre of the war. The war will only be finished when either Germany or the British Empire is brought down, and that will not come about through anything that happens in the Near East or Africa or Asia, but only by mortal combat at close range. And in this central,

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decisive battlefield the effects of our victory in the air were not so positive or immediate as elsewhere. It prevented Germany from coming to grips with us this summer, but it did not enable us to come to grips with her. It did, however, secure for the time being our island base for continuing and intensifying both our war of moral and material attrition by air attack and blockade and our efforts to equip and train our forces for the final struggle. It also gave us, so to speak, a moral breathing-space. In the midst of a decisive battle it is difficult to think of anything but winning it. But during these winter months we have been given a chance of looking beyond the battle and thinking about the kind of world that may emerge from it and looking also behind the battle-front and thinking about our own Britain and its future. The urgent need of considering the problems of domestic Reconstruction is explained in the next article in this issue, and it is hoped in subsequent issues to examine some of the principal problems separately. Plans of reconstruction in the international field are a far more difficult matter. We have promised to restore the freedom and independence of our European Allies: but more positive or detailed plans are impossible at present for the simple reason that, even assuming that our victory is as complete as we mean it to be, we cannot foretell what the military and ideological map of the world will be when the war is over. The recognition of that fact has induced a healthy reaction in this country. We hear less of cut-and-dried solutions of the problem of international security. A "period of convalescence" is now envisaged—a period of several years in which, in the shelter of a provisional peace-settlement, the nations can examine the actual situation that has emerged from the war and freely and safely discuss the evolution of a new world-order. But, if detailed planning must wait till then, it would be quite wrong for that reason to drop the whole subject out of our minds. In the first place the resolve that there shall be a new world-order, better than the old, is a vital part of the moral armament which will carry us to victory. Secondly, there are certain facts in the present

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world-situation which nothing can change. They will remain facts whatever the issue of the war. And we shall prepare our minds for the period of reconstruction if we look at these facts and think about them. Two or three of the more important of them may be very briefly mentioned here.

The first has already been referred to. Under the conditions of modern warfare the two great democratic systems, the British Commonwealth and the United States, are incapable of safeguarding their common heritage in isolation. As long as it remains possible for any great nation to prepare for and to launch aggressive war, that fact will stand. Developments in aeronautics will confirm it. The recognition of it by both British and American opinion is the most encouraging element in the whole situation; and if, in the light of it, the British Commonwealth and the United States continue to think and act together as they are doing now, that in itself will be the strongest single guarantee for the stability of any new order of peace and freedom that may be built up.

But Anglo-American co-operation, though the strongest guarantee of security, is not enough by itself to ensure it. Another unchallengeable fact is Britain's geographical position on the edge of Europe. However great the concerted power of the British Commonwealth and the United States, the nearness of Britain to potential bases of attack from the Continent remains the weakest strategic point in the combination, its "Achilles' heel". Of sheer necessity we in Britain must concern ourselves with the fate of the countries fringing the English Channel and the North Sea. Nor is it only a close-range question. The problems of war and peace in these days of air power cannot be properly considered on less than a continental scale. Behind that north-western fringe of the European continent is, and always will be, Germany, and the obstacle to the peaceful progress of civilisation presented by the strength and character of the German people—the only really formidable obstacle—will not be dissipated merely by the fall of Hitler and his system. The ideals of Prussianism must be rooted from the German mind. The Germans must

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finally discard the belief in their rôle as a *Herrenvolk* which has clouded their minds and stirred their emotions for a hundred years. They must learn to be content with the leadership in the tasks of peace to which their great qualities entitle them. They must find a beneficent release for their abundant energies in that new order of free and equal opportunity which it will be the task of democratic statesmanship to create. Till all that comes about there will always be a danger that, though the second German attempt to master the world be defeated as decisively as the first, it still may not be the last.

One other fact may be mentioned, a fact of a different order, the sort of fact which some but by no means all men, owing perhaps to an instinctive reticence about the things of the spirit or to a proper distrust of highfalutin sentiment, are inclined to shy away from. The modern world must renew its faith in the moral purpose of life. Political and economic reorganisation is a secondary matter in the domestic and international fields alike. Peace on earth is unattainable without genuine and active good-will among men.

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I

IN this war, unlike the last, the chance that war's destruction brings for post-war reconstruction has been seen from the start. Looking back, we can see clearly that the war of 1914-18 had a number of entries on the credit side of the ledger to set against its appalling debits; but it was quite a time after August 1914 before serious and widespread discussion began on the theme of reconstruction. This time the air has been thick from the start with plans for making the fullest use of any opportunity that the war—or more accurately the peace—may provide. To the cynical it has even seemed at times that more brain-power was being devoted to the terms of the peace than to the winning of the war.

As with other aspects of this surprising war, however, there have been great changes since the summer. A year ago, Reconstruction meant a new European order. To-day, it means a better Britain. We hear less to-day about the possibility (or impossibility) of Federal Union; there is less argument about the prospect of establishing a Catholic South German State to end the hegemony of Prussia; the viability of a Danubian Federation is less eagerly canvassed. Instead, the air is full of the need for a regeneration of democracy here at home.

The reasons for the change are obvious enough. We no longer think of totalitarianism as a strange aberration that will soon collapse of its own inner weakness. We recognise it as a challenge that the democratic system can only hope to meet if it, too, is strong in the field, convincing in its propaganda, efficient in its economic organisation. It may still be true that the vices of Nazism will ultimately undermine the stamina of the German people. But the long run in which the inherent

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excellences of democracy are automatically to triumph over the inherent defects of totalitarianism now looks very long indeed—the sort of long run in which the British Commonwealth of Nations might well be dead. We can no longer rely on our democratic virtue being its own military reward. So far in this war, democracy as a system of government has not made a very good showing. We know from our history and our instincts that democratic governments can be both bold and far-sighted; so we do not despair of democracy. But we need something a lot more effective than we had in the five years to May 1940.

Another reason for the change is that, while the prospect of being able to dictate a new European order has receded, the possibility of making practical progress at home has increased. Confidence in ultimate victory is unabated; but a complete victory, which would enable us to lay the foundations of a new Europe, is clearly not just round the next turn in the road. Moreover, to create a new European system without continental allies, save those whom our power alone will release from bondage, is a taller order than some of those dreams of last winter. We shall not be able to throw our weight to one side of a balance of power; we shall first have to create the balance. The doubts and the obscurities are enough to give the hardest Utopist pause. But at home the conditions have improved as they have deteriorated abroad. We have a government that reflects the sacred union of the nation; we have a universal mood of reform. It would be foolish, of course, not to press on with the foundation of our policy for the New Europe. But reconstruction in Europe must remain on paper for some years to come; reconstruction at home can begin at once.

No one who has moved among the people during these months of tension can fail to have noticed this resolve that British democracy shall be regenerated. It is stronger, of course, on the Left than on the Right. But even in the hardest-dying of conservative circles, the conviction is universal that "things will never be the same again". For the moment, there

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have almost ceased to be any reactionaries. There is no nostalgia, this time, for "back to pre-war".

The omens are, of course, being misread. To those who cannot think of progress save in terms of their favourite ideology, the call for reform is a personal invitation. There is not a sect of reformers in the country but is making an attempt to find a place for its nostrum under the wing of strategic necessity. The absurdity would be manifest if the ideologists confined themselves to arguments that Britain could not win the war unless she adhered to the cause of the Single Tax, or British Israel, or the Baconian Theory. The absurdity is still there—though it is not so obvious—when it is argued that only a Socialist Britain can be victorious. The peoples of Europe, who would never vote their own brands of Socialism into power, still less fight for them, will, it is argued, rise as one man and strangle the Gestapo with their bare hands, once they see that the British people, swallowing the prejudices of their steady majority, have made themselves the armed champions of a new Socialistic order.

It must not be thought that this criticism is directed exclusively against the doctrines of the Left. It is merely given as an illustration of what should surely be the historically obvious fact that the British people, though they may have their moods of reform and radicalism, are rarely revolutionary and never addicted to consistent ideologies. The English tradition, as the Prime Minister recently pointed out, is one of progress *and* continuity, and neither element can be forgotten. It is this dualism that explains what would otherwise have been the paradox of British political thought in the past six months. On the one hand, a marked growth of the readiness to re-examine the foundations of our society: a temper so radical as to be almost revolutionary. On the other hand, the complete discrediting of the revolutionary parties of the Right and the Left alike: a great rallying to the forces of moderation. This unity is the most precious national possession we have; it has brought us through the awful peril of this last summer and it will carry us to victory in some summer to come. It

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must at all costs be cherished and preserved. To stand still and resist the demand for Reconstruction will endanger it. To plan Reconstruction in accordance with any formal ideology will endanger it no less. The British people are rediscovering the excellences of their own tradition. The policy they will support will be progressive, perhaps radically so, but it will be empirical. They will move fast and boldly, but not at the cost of driving any minority into embitterment. They call for change, but not in the main lineaments of that national structure which they esteem so highly above all others that they willingly give their blood and their treasure to preserve it.

II

THE recognition of the need for a regeneration of our democracy is, as has been said, amazingly widespread—far more so than at any time in the last war. But there are those who, either out of genuine misconception or out of guile, plead that this is not the time. The opportunity for reconstruction, they say, will come when the war is over. It is possible to distinguish two variants of this objection. The first is the simple strategic anxiety that every minute of attention, every ounce of effort, given to any object other than military victory is a dangerous weakening of the national strength, which will need to be at its maximum if the victory is to be won. The second variant has been stated with his usual pungency by Dean Inge: "Those who prate about a better social order after the war are talking mischievous nonsense. However the war ends, we shall be an impoverished nation. We shall all have to work harder and spend less." These are objections that are widely held; they must be met.

The answer to the first objection is that reconstruction must be planned now or never. It is not true that the opportunity will come when the victory is won; the opportunity will then disappear. Faction and disillusion have been the immediate fruits of every victory in history. National unity of purpose will not vanish with the Armistice; but it will be

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overlaid by a renewal of party conflicts and sectional struggles. Indeed, we must hope that it will be so, for the only forces that can make unanimity natural in a thinking community are the sense of common peril or obedience to a common master, and we do not hope to have the second when the first is gone. In the First German War the great social advances were recorded before the Armistice, not after it. The two parliamentary sessions of 1917 and 1918, when the anxieties of the war were uppermost, saw such achievements as the Sex Disqualification Removal Act, the Representation of the People Act, Fisher's great Education Act and others of hardly less importance. The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms were drawn up in 1917. The post-Armistice years, compared with these two war-time years, were almost barren of achievement. Indeed, it must always be so. It is the fires of war that have softened the framework of our society, and we must strike while the metal is soft if we are to determine its new shape. There are many things, of course, that will be physically unattainable in war-time. Anything to do with an increase in the standard of living is out of court so long as the war-time necessity to contract consumption exists. Discussions of the proper use of leisure must be academic while munition factories work overtime and the black-out kills recreation. But the plans must be laid, worked out, agreed and enacted during the war if anything is to come of them at all.

But even this answer to the objection, conclusive though it is, rather misses the point. Plans for reconstruction—provided they answer the unity of the nation and do not disturb it—are not a hindrance to the strategists; they are a necessary part of the grand strategy of victory, both at home and abroad. The argument that we must know what we are fighting for has, it is true, been ridiculously exaggerated and exploited. We know well enough what we are fighting for. The peoples of the world know what we are fighting for—they know better than we do, for many of them have experienced all the horrors, large and small, of a twentieth-century tyranny. British democracy, as we ourselves admit, is far from perfect; but set

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alongside the madnesses, the brutalities, the corruptions of Nazism or Fascism, it is something to fight for or to yearn for. England is a programme in herself. But in the political as in the military sphere, an army that acts always on the defensive will soon cease to be an army. Let the doubters ask any man or woman in the street what he or she is fighting for, to keep England as she is, or for the right to use English ideas in making England better. And let them ask themselves which ambition is the more likely to sustain the spirit of the people. Outside this island, too, we cannot afford for ever to be on the spiritual defensive. We shall need allies before a complete victory is won and we shall not awaken their enthusiasm with military victories alone. If we can prove among our own people that democracy is a cause as bold and dynamic, as young and as forceful, as any tyrant's "New Order", we shall not have to coax allies to our standard.

The other objection raises a complicated economic question. In an acquisitive society the temptation is always great to think that the wealth of a community is what it can pile up, and, by extension, to exaggerate the damage done when bombs fall. But the standard of living of a nation depends upon the amount of wealth it can create afresh, year after year. It is true that our high standard of living is raised by the capital that our ancestors accumulated in the past—to the roads, the machinery, the factories they left us. The standard of living goes down *during* the war, because the wealth-producing capacity of the country is then used for purposes that contribute nothing to the economic well-being of the people; but it will go up again after the war because the wealth-producing capacity will then be liberated for useful employments. It is true that, in order to obtain war supplies from abroad, we are now rapidly using up our capital assets of gold and foreign investments. But, apart from this, the war must be paid for, in any real sense, while it is going on, and only a fraction of the real cost can be drawn from the accumulations of the past or left to be borne by the future. Subject, therefore, to the important qualification arising from the loss of our position as an international

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creditor, the standard of living of the future will not be mortgaged by the present war.

This argument would sound very theoretical, were it not borne out by the experience of the last war. It is true that for many long years after the Armistice of 1918 the country believed itself to be half-ruined. But this was due to two separate causes of misconception. In the first place, it so happened that the industrial changes of the last war, though they produced a number of flourishing new industries, dealt heavy blows at the old staple industries of Great Britain. It took some time to realise that the old measures of industrial activity—tons of coal mined, tons of steel produced, millions of square yards of cotton goods woven—were no longer representative of the new Britain, which earned its living more and more by such things as motor-cars, wireless, the expansion of distribution and the like. And secondly, in the readjustments between the social classes, some classes were hit very hard—all who lived on fixed incomes and landed proprietors most of all. “The masses” were better off, but “the classes” suffered—and they did not suffer in silence. But that “the masses” were better off after the last war admits of no doubt; they had higher real incomes even though their hours of work had been drastically reduced. As for the prosperity of the salaried classes, one needs only to look at the outward and visible signs, at the cars they bought, the houses they built, the ever-increasing numbers in which they sent their sons to be educated at expensive boarding-schools. The prosperity of the community as a whole is summed up in the estimates of the National Income. They show no fall, on balance, over the decade 1914-24; indeed, when allowance is made for the great intervening reduction in the hours of labour, the rate of economic progress over that decade was as rapid as in the preceding half-century. In spite of all the disturbances it left behind it, the war of 1914-18 did not impoverish the British community.

This argument, it may be objected, makes no allowance for air bombing. That is true; but the allowance that has to be made can be exaggerated. Bombing has to be severe, as

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Mr. Keynes has recently pointed out, before it causes a million pounds worth of damage in a day, and, though it may be that the actual destruction in the past few months has been at a considerably higher rate, our building industry is capable, in peace-time, of rebuilding a million pounds worth in a day. Moreover, there is a very vital distinction to be made between different varieties of destruction. When a dwelling-house is destroyed, that is admittedly a loss to its owner and to the community; but it does not affect his ability to earn a living. The house will have to be replaced after the war, and its replacement will be one of the first charges on the National Income; but its loss does not diminish the nation's wealth-creating capacity, as the loss of a factory or the destruction of a power plant would do. The distinction is between losses which are a charge on the income of the future, and those which actually diminish that income. Obviously, only a small part of the damage done falls into the second category. It may be that for some years after the war we shall suffer from a serious insufficiency of housing accommodation, and that we shall have to devote a substantial part of our productive resources for a fairly long period to rebuilding. But the productive resources available for this task will not be materially reduced. Indeed, the amount of rebuilding we shall have to do may prove to be an economic blessing in disguise, for it will provide a public works programme of the least contestable variety to see us through the inevitable crisis of demobilisation.

There remain, of course, the reactions on our economic prosperity that will arise from the loss of our international financial assets, and the possibility that we may emerge from the war as an international debtor rather than an international creditor, only able perhaps to import the materials and food-stuffs we require to the extent that we succeed in selling industrial exports in face of extremely severe competition from other countries. Here we touch on problems that are likely to be really difficult; but in facing them we shall not be without sources of strength; and it would be pessimistic to assume

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that such difficulties need entail a lowering of the standard of living which will be either substantial or prolonged. On the contrary, it is rather the existence of such difficulties that gives rise to the need for planning reconstruction.

III

WHAT, however, does this rather vague word "Reconstruction" mean? What are we to plan for within the progressive but empirical limits of the English tradition? Where shall we find our guide, if not in the neat categories of a revolutionary ideology? Any attempt to lay down an imperative series of objectives would, of course, be to fall headlong into the trap that has been pointed out. Nevertheless, the lines of approach can usefully be surveyed without any endeavour to prejudice the issue or commit the enthusiasm of the public to any cut-and-dried programme.

It is the *sorts* of reconstruction that need now to be clearly defined, rather than any specific measures sketched out. The first of these varieties is manifestly reconstruction in the literal sense, the rebuilding of what has been knocked down. But even this is not a simple job. To put it at its very lowest, somebody will have to decide which buildings shall be rebuilt first. The Government has the whip hand through its control of compensation payments, and the chaotic conditions that would follow on everybody trying to place orders at once are so blatantly obvious that some degree of organisation, some scale of priorities, is generally agreed to be necessary. But are we to be content merely to rebuild *in situ*? Beautiful and historic buildings have not been the only targets of German bombs; many eyesores and hundreds of slum houses have been demolished. Is the only obligation to be laid on their owners that they should stand in the queue? When their turn is reached, are they to be allowed to rebuild as they wish? Clearly not; everyone, from the Prime Minister downwards, has recognised the opportunity that rebuilding will present; the analogy with Wren's plan for the rebuilding of London after

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the Great Fire has been drawn repeatedly (though perhaps not always very accurately). But the difficulty is that Goering is much more indiscriminate than the Great Fire. He rarely razes a whole street of slums; he removes half of an obstruction to traffic, but leaves the other half standing. We shall not have the opportunity of starting again from the beginning; the only real choice before us is between a good job and a bad job of patching. All the greater, however, is the need for very careful forethought and planning. There has been much, perhaps premature, jubilation over the assignment to Lord Reith and the new Ministry of Works and Buildings of the task of taking thought on this subject; it appears that Lord Reith is not charged with drawing up a plan, but only with investigating the possibility of drawing up a plan. But at least a beginning has been made and a man of driving energies put in charge. Even within this small subdivision of the whole question of Reconstruction, the problems are immense. Lord Reith has a magnificent opportunity.

A second category of problems is almost as obvious and quite as obligatory as physical rebuilding—this is the other aspects of readjustment. After the war there will be men and women by the million to be fitted once more into peace-time employments. There will be industries that have been swollen during the war to gigantic proportions to be relieved of the troubles that may follow from surplus capacity. There will be industries which have had to close down during the war to be rewarded for their patriotic sacrifice by being restored to profitability. It would be over-optimistic to assume that there will not be a new crop of depressed industries to care for. Here indeed is an agenda for much careful forethought. Fortunately there is some reason for hoping that we may be able to surmount the difficulties with more success this time than last. After 1918 the most stubborn element in our economic maladjustment was the decline in our export trade. But export, important though it will always be for a crowded island, forms a much smaller part of our total economy to-day than it did a generation ago. In 1913 something like one-third

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of all our industrial output was for export. By 1938 the proportion had fallen to something more like one-eighth. Moreover, the attrition of two decades of tariff wars had reduced our foreign trade much closer to the indispensable minimum. This is not to say that our export trade is immune to further reduction—far from it. But it is unlikely to suffer as much as after 1914, and, even if it did, the effect on our general prosperity would be smaller. Moreover, we have advanced a long way further in control of the trade cycle than we had in 1919. Then, the State barely recognised its responsibility. Now, it cannot escape it. Then, the only criterion of financial policy was “back to the gold standard”. Now, there is infinitely more elasticity of mind in approaching the problem and quite an armoury of weapons available. Here, then, is another whole range of questions on which the case for taking forethought is almost self-evident. We have a chance to control the post-war slump; but to do so we must have a plan of campaign.

The third category may be briefly called the acceptance of the lessons of the war. No community of human beings can be exposed to such a strain as modern warfare imposes without some weaknesses in structure or organisation being exposed. Some of the improvisations of the war will certainly be of permanent value. At this early stage of the war we cannot expect to know the full list, but one or two items can already be placed upon it. We are only now beginning to realise how completely unprepared for war our industry was and how grave a handicap we must always labour under if, after every war, we show such complete confidence in eternal peace. Whether, after this war, we shall find it advisable to keep larger standing forces can only be decided when we know the nature of the peace. But we shall be exceptionally blind to the lessons of 1936-40 if we do not maintain an embryo of munition industries, capable of rapid expansion, if we do not give all our citizens a minimum of training in their war-time duties, if we do not make certain that stocks of the essential materials are always kept in this island. Let us hope that, as

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a nation, we shall once again preach peace; but let us also not forget that we live in a dangerous world.

Unpreparedness in armaments is not, however, the gravest weakness in our national structure that the war has uncovered. There is a very widespread feeling of uneasiness over an apparent failure to train up a sufficient supply of men of ability to lead the nation. This uneasiness takes several forms. On the one hand, there are those who are struck by the almost undeniable fact that there are no giants in the land to-day as there have always been before. In politics, where is there a galaxy of talent to compare with the Asquiths, the Lloyd Georges, the Balfours, the Birkenheads, the Milners, the Carsons of the last war? In the Civil Service there is a strange lack of those brilliant young men who steered the ship of state through the last national crisis. In literature, there seem to be no successors to the Shaws, the Galsworthys, the Wellses of a generation ago. But, replies the alternative train of thought, this lack of ability at the top is not due to any lack of raw material. Look, for example, at those magnificent specimens of courage, skill and character, the pilots of the R.A.F. Does our peace-time social structure really take the advantage it might of men like these? Is the lack of ability at the top due to some defect, some bottleneck, in the system of selection? In short, is it our educational system that is at fault—not so much on the pedagogical as on the social side? As outside observers, from the Dominions as well as from foreign countries, have often pointed out, this is (to quote a recent article in the *Economist*) "the only country in the world where differences in accent (as distinct, of course, from differences in literacy) have a paramount social and economic importance"; and while our educational system provides an easy road for the able boy with the right accent, it imposes an invisible penalty on the able boy with the wrong accent. We cannot afford to handicap with lifelong inferiority complexes any men or women whose talents could serve the community. The whole basis of our educational system will have to be overhauled, from the social point of view.

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Another set of questions arises in connection with our national industrial policy. Has that been on the right lines in the past decade? We have been in revolt against *laissez faire*, but we have been shy of State Socialism, with the result that our industries have been encouraged to organise themselves, with the blessing of the State. This process has been carried much farther since the outbreak of the war owing to the policy of selecting the controllers from the trade they are to control. As a nation, we have slipped into this system of State-encouraged cartels not from deliberate choice but in a fit of absent-mindedness. Is it really best suited to achieve that combination of progress with security that should be the economic objective of a dynamic democracy? The question most urgently needs to be asked, for if we are on the wrong road, the demobilisation of the war-time controls will be the last chance we shall have to change course.

Here, then, are three large questions which the stress and strain of war have brought in front of our eyes and which we cannot very well avoid seeking to answer. There are, of course, plenty more—the readjustment of town and country life, especially for children, that has been forced on us by evacuation; the new conception of the colonial responsibilities of a mother country, to which a first expression has already been given by this year's White Paper. But enough has perhaps been said to show that the call for Reconstruction is not a cloudy idealist's whim but a matter of hard practical necessity.

IV

THE analogy with the last war has led on many sides to a demand for the creation of a Ministry of Reconstruction. But the Ministry of a quarter-century ago was hardly an unqualified success, and a resurrection to-day would suffer from the same defects. It is very difficult for a Ministry, with a field of activity assigned to it, to avoid becoming exclusive and a little jealous of other people's ideas. Moreover, this particular Ministry, set up in the middle of a war, would inevitably

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be placed in charge of a second-rate politician and staffed with those third-rate Civil Servants whom their present departments could be prevailed upon to spare. Add to these initial disadvantages the caution and discretion that a Government Department must necessarily observe, and a Ministry of Reconstruction begins to look like an admirable device for stifling the whole project. In any case the Government has rejected it and set up a Cabinet Committee instead of it. "I believe", said Mr. Bevin at the Trades Union Congress at Southport on October 9, "it is better to make it a Cabinet job than a Ministry of Reconstruction. A Ministry of Reconstruction like that of the last war may result in the production of a lot of documents that find their home of rest in pigeon holes, but if the Cabinet itself takes responsibility then it draws from the Departments the best contribution that they can make to reconstruction itself."

So far, so good; but is this machinery enough? Will the Cabinet Committee obtain all it will need from the Departments, already working overtime on the immediate problems of the war, and hampered in meeting this new call by their traditional caution and conservatism? Surely the machinery is incomplete unless it also enables the Cabinet Committee to draw directly on the unofficial experience and thinking of the country. For that it is clearly not enough to solicit unofficial opinion: the Committee's table would soon be piled high with memoranda which its members could not possibly find time to sift and digest. Nor are private investigators in a position to draw upon the fund of knowledge possessed by all those permanent Civil Servants or temporary recruits who are now working for the Government. Some body is needed to aid and advise the Cabinet Committee which, while less official than a whole new Ministry, is invested with Government sanction and authority. The solution might very well be found in a small, but very carefully chosen, Commission, not all of whose members need necessarily give all their time to its work. The Commissioners should, of course, be chosen for their personal qualities, not as attorneys for a series of

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interests; but they would inevitably cover the whole range of political views, of social classes, and of ages. The Commission could operate through sub-Commissions for each line of enquiry, with full power to co-opt individuals of special interests or experience. The Commissioners alone would bear the authority of the State, but they would be able to draw on the brains of a very wide range of men and women. Virtually all the best brains of the country are, of course, very fully occupied by the war, and few of them might be ready to abandon their war preoccupations for full-time work on Reconstruction. But there are equally few who could not find the minimum time necessary for assisting with matters on which they have special knowledge.

These suggestions on machinery are, however, subsidiary to the main point that this article has sought to make: that there is a great deal of hard work to be done on Reconstruction, that there is no time to be lost in making a start, and that the Government can evade the responsibility for providing the appropriate machinery only at the cost of leaving the nation as unprepared to face the peace as it was to face the war.

THE STRATEGY OF THE WAR. V

I. THE AIR WAR AND INVASION

WHEN the last article in this series went to press on August 21 last, the Germans had already sustained severe reverses in their first attempts to secure supremacy in the air as a necessary preliminary to the invasion of Britain. Hitler had said before the war that "Navies are the obsolete toys of plutocratic nations", and, when he made that remark, he and his advisers firmly believed that a powerful air force could deny the seas to navies or at any rate could secure complete command of narrow seas such as the English Channel and the North Sea. In accordance with that fallacy, which did not recognise the effect of co-operation between a navy and an air force, and certainly did not anticipate that we should have an air force capable of defeating his, Hitler launched his *Luftwaffe* on August 8 on their first task, namely, to drive our naval and mercantile ships off the Channel and North Sea and destroy our naval bases and mercantile harbours from the Thames Estuary to Weymouth. The result was startling. In one week, ending August 17, the R.A.F. and Fleet Air Arm and ground defences astounded the world by bringing down 492 German aircraft* for the loss of only 115 British (46 pilots saved). This record includes a remarkable victory on August 15 when 180 German aircraft crashed with a loss of only 34 British (17 pilots saved). Meanwhile work proceeded as usual at our naval bases and harbours, and naval and merchant ships continued to steam on all seas.

Staggered by this totally unexpected blow, Goering now ordered his Air Force to abandon its previous objective and

* To all official figures in this article of German aircraft brought down it is safe to add 20 per cent. for machines which, although their crash was not seen, have certainly never flown since. There is a further unknown quantity of machines destroyed on the ground by bombing.

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concentrate on destroying the aerodromes in South-East England and the machines they contained, so as to cripple the R.A.F. and make possible another attempt at air supremacy. On August 18 the *Luftwaffe* set out with a special force of dive bombers to accomplish this new task. On that day 153 German aircraft failed to return, while the British lost 22 (12 pilots saved). By the end of August the total for the month was 1,109 German aircraft destroyed for the loss of 372 British (148 pilots saved). By September 6, 244 more German machines had been brought down as against 106 British (69 pilots safe).

Again Goering changed his objective. If he could not win battles, he must try to destroy the great shipping and manufacturing resources of London. On September 7 the first great mass attack was made on London with particular attention to the docks. On that date 103 German aircraft were destroyed for the loss of 22 British (9 pilots safe). The Germans, however, persisted in these attacks; they dared not admit failure. This phase of the contest culminated in a great British victory on September 15, when 185 German aircraft crashed and only 25 British (14 pilots safe). On September 11 the strength of anti-aircraft barrage round London was reinforced, and thenceforward it has operated with steadily increasing efficiency.

From the very first day of this attack on London the Germans had been prevented from carrying out concentrated and well-aimed bombing on key points of war production or essential services. They now no longer expected or attempted to hit such targets. They were given the easier task of indiscriminate bombing of the civilian population of London in their homes and offices in the vain hope that they would break civilian morale. But their losses still mounted up. In the month of September they lost 1,102 aircraft and the British 387 (316 pilots safe), almost the same results as in the month of August. These figures cover a big British victory on September 27 (133 German machines destroyed).

During this intensive air warfare from August 8 to the end of September the ratio of machines destroyed was 1 British to 3 German, but even more important was the ratio of loss of

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valuable trained airmen, 1 British to 7 German, due not only to the destruction of machines but to our loss being in fighting machines carrying only one airman (the pilot), whereas a large percentage of the German machines were bombers carrying 3 to 5 airmen. German airmen, moreover, when brought down, were dead or captured, whereas 50 per cent. of ours baled out to safety in their own country. This meant a great gain in relative strength.

The destruction of 2,211 machines and their crews in August and September was an immense addition to the great cumulative losses inflicted on the Germans during the war by our Allies as well as ourselves. It has been authoritatively reckoned that from the beginning of the war up to the end of September 1940 the Germans lost 6,500 machines. Of that total the R.A.F. claim over 2,500 in European countries excluding Great Britain. In the month of May 1940 French, Belgians and Dutch claim 1,075, and, before they retired from the war, the French had raised their own claim to over 1,000.

The Germans throughout the war had pinned their faith on mass formations delivering concentrated aimed attacks by daylight. It was thus they had destroyed a square mile of Rotterdam in a few hours. It was thus they had overpowered resistance on land in the course of their successful invasions. They did not believe in the efficacy of bombing by night. But in the invasion of England the R.A.F. shattered these mass attacks, and by the end of September had driven the Germans to make all their serious attacks by night in small groups, dropping unaimed bombs indiscriminately.

Before they abandoned their favourite daylight method they tried variations in formation and tactics. To begin with they had employed a mass of bombers with a relatively small fighter escort. As their losses mounted, they reduced the proportion of bombers and steadily increased the escort of fighters, stepped up in layers to great heights. When that failed they substituted for their favourite single great mass several big groups, each with its proportion of bombers and fighters spread fanwise, in the hope that some groups would get

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through and carry out concentrated bombing. But they did not. At the beginning of October, in the face of continued and unbearable losses in machines and personnel, the Germans withdrew their bombers entirely from daylight attacks and used very few even at night. They gave to their fighters the task of carrying from one-tenth to one-quarter of a bomber's load of bombs, for which they were not designed or really suited.

After despatching a few fighter machines with bombs, each escorted by four or more fighters, at intervals during the day for nuisance purposes, they now made their main efforts at night, sending over, in wave after wave, small groups of fighters carrying a reduced bomb-load and flying at great heights up to 30,000 feet or more. While this method has greatly reduced the bomb-load carried and makes no attempt to aim concentrated fire on useful targets, it has posed a very difficult problem to the R.A.F. and the anti-aircraft gunners by day and by night. It has enabled a considerable number of machines to carry out at night indiscriminate dispersed bombing of the civilian population of London and other cities. Moreover, these numerous small groups scattered over the whole vault of the sky at different heights up to a ceiling of 30,000 feet do not provide the magnificent target of mass formation on which mass losses can be inflicted. Thus, while avoiding the task of inflicting serious damage on important targets, the Germans have also succeeded in avoiding losses to themselves on the previous expensive scale, and at the same time reduced not only the ratio of loss of machines compared to ours, but also, and to a greater extent, the ratio of loss of airmen, since the large bomber crews are almost entirely withdrawn from the battle.

It may be said, to sum up, that the Germans, foiled in their attempt to deliver a knock-out blow, are now mainly relying on the effect of indiscriminate night-bombing, combined with small and scattered daylight raids, on the morale of the civilian population, especially in London. They have done a lot of damage to buildings in London and a good deal in other cities,

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and the casualties have been severe, though relatively not serious. It has taken $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons of bombs to kill one person in London. In the month of September 6,954 civilians were killed in the country as a whole and 10,615 seriously injured. The October total was less by 2,540. Normal habits of life and business have been dislocated to some extent, but war production has not been substantially affected. The determination of the people to defeat the Germans has been hardened. In the dangerous areas they are adapting themselves with great courage to "dwelling under fire". Measures are being taken to reduce the casualties and to care for those disturbed. Meantime there is good reason to hope that new means will soon be found to intercept the bombers by night as well as by day. Night bombing cannot be entirely prevented, but it may be greatly reduced.

Side by side with the successful air defence an equally important offensive has been launched by the R.A.F. and Fleet Air Arm on vital objectives in Germany. Unlike the Germans, we have for many years studied and practised concentrated aimed bombing by night on carefully selected and defined targets. Since May 10, 1940, night after night, almost without interruption and practically without any interception by the enemy, our bombers in increasing numbers, with complete contempt of A.A. fire and with a very small percentage of casualties, have flown to every part of Germany and also to Italy to drop their bombs upon the methodically selected targets which they are ordered to find and destroy. The Prime Minister has said that "our object is to inflict the maximum harm on the German war-making capacity". Every bomb, therefore, has been carefully aimed at naval bases, dockyards, shipping concentrations, invasion ports, aerodromes, railways and marshalling yards, canals, munition factories, essential services of electricity and gas, and so forth. While the Germans, not understanding the British character, are gambling with their Air Force on the political effect of indiscriminate bombing of the civilian population, we are planting every blow where it does vital damage, where we know it reduces war-productive

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capacity. The Ministry of Information has recently issued a fully documented account of the damage done by 700 of our air raids on Germany. Of the attacks on the shipping and motor barges collected at the "invasion ports" from Rotterdam to Brest, the most successful and shattering were the combined bombardments by the Navy and Air Force on Cherbourg harbour and docks on the night of October 8, and on Dunkirk on the night of October 17.

What has been the effect of this intensive air war from August 8 onwards on Hitler's project of invasion? It is obvious, in the first place, that on September 15 the *Blitz* went out of the *Krieg*, short circuited and earthed; for on that day the German High Command must have realised that they could not obtain mastery of the air over the home-waters and coasts of this island, and by the lack of such mastery the difficulties of invasion were immeasurably increased. Then came a further check. From September 16 to 19 great damage was done to the shipping and barges in the invasion ports by heavy gales. As in the dark days of the Spanish Armada—the R.A.F. bombers playing the part of Drake's fireships—*Deus affavit*. Meantime, night after night, the air bombardment of those ports and their huddled craft was steadily maintained. But it was not only owing to our Air Force that those 80 of the best German divisions were kept standing all the way from Rotterdam to Cherbourg, awaiting but never getting the order to embark on the special ships and motor barges intended to carry a modern force of half a million men with their tanks and guns to England in one voyage. Despite the triumphs of the R.A.F. that voyage might still have been ventured on if the Navy had not been ready to intercept it at sea and if a trained and organised Army of three-quarters of a million had not been awaiting its outcome on land. It was the existence of all three fighting services, not one only, that foiled invasion and made victory possible. The Army in this country caused Hitler to detail as many as 80 divisions and to assemble the mass of shipping needed for their rapid transport, but the Air Force smashed a large

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proportion of the shipping and prevented him from securing the mastery of the air, while the Navy stood ready to pounce on the great flock of defenceless vessels if they left harbour. Without the Army the target for the Air Force and the Navy might not have been big enough to ensure detection and interception. Without the Air Force our bases and harbours and communications in this country would have been smashed. Without the Navy there would have been enough shipping left to make the gamble of invasion worth trying. It should be noted, too, that all three services were *operating near their bases*, and therefore with maximum effect.

So far, then, the plan of invasion has been thwarted, but let us heed the Prime Minister's warning that the danger of it has not passed and will not pass until the war is won. He exhorts us to continuous vigilance. Just as the Germans in the battle of the Low Countries drew Allied reserves into Belgium and then struck a decisive blow at a weak centre, so they will be constantly on the look out for an excessive withdrawal of the three fighting services from this country to carry out offensives overseas. As the Germans have at least 240 divisions and the Italians 85, the 80 picked divisions still stand and will continue to stand near the invasion ports. In the short days and long nights of the winter there are fewer, but still several, periods when one essential condition for invasion, a calm sea, prevails, and in winter such a condition is often accompanied by fog, which blinds defence and shrouds attack. In the clear visibility of the long summer days the Air Force holds the enemy's preparations in the harbours like an insect under a microscope, and the Navy's task of interception is greatly lightened, but in winter the difficulties for these two services and for the defending Army are much increased. While, however, we give due, but not excessive, consideration to the risk of invasion, we must on no account allow it to impede our preparations for offensives overseas. We are entitled to look forward to the day when the rapidly progressing rate of increase in all our three fighting services will make the risk of counter-invasion a matter of grave anxiety to the

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enemy and cause him to regret that he has so greatly extended the length of coast requiring troops to watch it. But that day is still some way off. The time, for example, when we shall dominate the air numerically as well as in quality has recently been put by the Prime Minister at "this time next year".

II. RESULTS OF VICTORY

THIS article is not the place to examine the effects of the Battle of Britain on the war-situation as a whole and particularly on the attitude of neutral countries. We must confine ourselves here to considering its military effects, among the most important of which were the leasing of British territory to the United States for air and naval bases in the West Atlantic and the transfer of 50 American destroyers to the British Navy. The advantage of both these arrangements to us is obviously great, but that of the second was more immediate. The loss of the French Navy had left a great gap in the Allied system of patrols in the Atlantic, while the German occupation of the coast from Norway to Spain had provided the enemy with numerous bases for submarines, surface raiders and aircraft, not only in the Channel but in the Bay of Biscay. On November 5 a convoy of 37 vessels escorted by the armed merchant cruiser, *H.M.S. Jervis Bay* (acting Captain E. S. F. Fegen, R.N.), was attacked by a powerful surface raider. The story of the gallant but hopeless fight which enabled 34 ships of the convoy to escape will take its place among the finest episodes in our naval history. The opportunities for submarine attack on the trade routes approaching Britain from the west were now immensely greater than at any time in the course of the last war, since the submarines could not only operate at much closer range but could work in conjunction with bombing aircraft. The renewed submarine attack in May was redoubled in June after the collapse of France. The "graph" of the loss of mercantile shipping rose steeply till for the week ending October 20 it reached the alarming figure of 146,528 British tons sunk in that week, a

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figure not registered since the worst months of 1917. Fortunately that is not an average; some weekly figures before and since have been much less. As the Prime Minister has said, the fifty American destroyers, now all coming into action, will be very useful.

Another quarter in which the effect of the Battle of Britain was quickly visible was the French Colonial Empire. On August 27 the French residents in the Tchad Territory, quickly followed by those in French Equatorial Africa and the Cameroons, declared for the cause of Free Frenchmen and continued alliance with the British Empire, and ejected those who were administering their territories on behalf of the Vichy Government. At first sight these vast stretches of tropical jungle or desert in the distant heart of Africa would not appear to be of great strategical importance, but in fact they constitute, with the adjacent British and Belgian territories, a wide Allied barrier across Central Africa from sea to sea, along which an air route can be established to shorten our communications with the East. This barrier will stop German agents from infiltrating by air and seeking to dominate and utilise for their own ends the servants of the Vichy Government, as they have done at Dakar. Moreover, the rehoisting of the flag of freedom on French soil was bound to affect all neighbouring French territories. Many Frenchmen in French West Africa and Morocco, it was reported, were at heart with their compatriots in the south. French airmen in Morocco began to fly their machines to Gibraltar, not, like some of their comrades a little later, to bomb it, but to join up with the R.A.F.

Attention was now fixed on the strategic port of Dakar, the most westerly point in Africa, the terminus of a railway running to the river Niger, the starting-point for cable and air routes to South America only 1,800 miles distant across the narrowest part of the Atlantic Ocean, a base which in hostile hands would constitute a grave naval and air menace to the sea-routes linking Britain with South Africa and South America. Here appeared to be the most suitable point for

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General de Gaulle with his force of Free Frenchmen to raise his standard and start the salvation of the French Empire as a preliminary to the rescue of France itself. And French sympathisers with his cause at Dakar itself appealed to de Gaulle to come and lead them. It seemed legitimate to hope that the example of Dakar and French West Africa might presently be followed by French Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, and even Syria, and that thus the priceless strategic advantage of an Allied front along the southern shore of the Mediterranean, thrown away by a surplus of four votes in the French Cabinet on June 16, might after all be recovered.

But the Germans had flown their agents to Dakar, and it was doubtless at their instigation that its Vichy Government asked for help from Vichy. It was promptly given. Three French cruisers and three destroyers left Toulon packed with troops, passed through the Straits of Gibraltar, and arrived at Dakar on September 15. Mr. Churchill has said that by "a series of accidents and some errors which have been made the subject of disciplinary action and enquiry" the news that these ships were making for the Straits of Gibraltar was not reported to the First Sea Lord or to the Cabinet in time, and that it was "not due to any infirmity of purpose on the part of the Government that these ships were not turned back at the Straits". He added that "the policy which His Majesty's Government had been pursuing towards the Vichy French warships was not to interfere with them unless they appeared to be proceeding to enemy-controlled ports".

The events which followed are fresh in the reader's mind—how de Gaulle's representatives tried to land under a flag of truce to hold a "parley", how they were fired on, the naval engagement which ensued, and the repulse of de Gaulle's landing-party. De Gaulle was hampered by his pledge to his men when he enlisted them that they would not be required to fight Frenchmen, a pledge recognised in his agreement with our Government. To put the matter quite briefly, the bloodless *coup d'état*, which had been planned, had been suddenly converted into a major operation of war for which

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the Allies had not a force on the spot of the right size or kind. It might even have developed into the opening of a new theatre of war at a time when the vital issues in the eastern Mediterranean called for all our available strength. The Dakar incident was wisely closed at once, and with it the bright hopes for the early restoration of a splendid strategical situation in the Mediterranean.

Some weeks later, the Free French position in the south was strengthened by the acquisition of the seaboard territory of Gabon which, though it lies next door to French Equatorial Africa, had maintained allegiance to Vichy. On November 10 its capital, Libreville, surrendered to de Gaulle who had landed forces in the neighbourhood, and a Free French government was installed in due course. The official statement made in Vichy that British warships had assisted in de Gaulle's landing was officially denied in London.

III. THE BRENNER PASS PLANS

THE chief effect of the British air-victory was its destruction of the German war plan. As Napoleon gazed at the British frigates in the Channel and then directed the attention of the French nation from his failure to invade England by marching the Grand Army to Ulm and Austerlitz, so Hitler gazed at the British aircraft in the sky and then journeyed to the Brenner Pass to concert plans with Mussolini, not for a *Blitzkrieg* on Britain this time, but for a long war against the British Empire. Subsequent action has disclosed the nature of some of the decisions they took on October 4, and there is sufficient evidence to justify reasonable guesswork about the rest.

Note, first, that, as in the last war, but to a greater degree now that France has collapsed and Italy has begun to fight, the enemy possesses "interior lines" for switching armies and air forces over the greater part of Europe. The railways, it is true, suffering from pre-war neglect and from air-attack, cannot transport armies so expeditiously as in the last war.

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But, as long as its aerodromes are serviceable, even an aircraft can be moved, say, from the Channel coast to the Balkans not in days but in hours; and an overwhelming air force only requires a very short time to do enormous damage. British counter-action is handicapped by lack of intermediate aerodromes. Our bombers can be transferred rapidly to the Balkans or Egypt and back again, but the transfer of fighters is not so easy by the routes available to us. Ground staff and equipment, without which aircraft cannot fight, must also be transferred.

Note, secondly, that before the Brenner Pass meeting, two threats of invasion had been mounted, one against England and the other against Egypt. Both these threats tie down large British forces. They may be maintained as threats only or they may be converted into direct action at very short notice on the English Channel, at longer and probably more evident notice on the Egyptian frontier. Thus, until our air force and army, and our naval flotillas of lighter vessels are increased to a point where there is a larger margin for offensive action, the Dictators expect to have a good deal of latitude elsewhere. And this pressure can be maintained throughout the year, regardless of weather. It has already been observed that winter weather might assist rather than impede invasion of this country. In Egypt the winter, in spite of temporary inconvenience from occasional rain, is a good campaigning season, and in the hot summer military operations, though trying, are perfectly feasible. In Europe and Russia and Asia Minor, however, weather conditions in December and January, and in many parts in November and February or even March, are strongly against an aggressor attempting long advances. In the last war no major strategical operation was started and consummated successfully in December or January. Occasionally an operation, started before November, was consummated with great difficulty and loss in December. But have these climatic factors been modified by the development of air-fighting? In the case of a small nation in Europe or Asia Minor, not supported by the air force of a stronger

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power, can air attack so disorganise the government and the army control (as in Poland) as to make it possible for small ground forces, which can manage to move in winter, to complete the occupation of the country? Probably the winter weather conditions will continue to add very seriously to the difficulties of an aggressive enterprise, but not to such a degree as formerly.

With these three points in mind—the German “interior lines”, the two invasion threats, and the coming of winter weather—the plans probably made at the Brenner Pass may be considered under four heads: (1) the loosening of the British blockade and the tightening of the Axis attempts at blockade, (2) the conquest of the Mediterranean coasts from Gibraltar to Port Said and the Dardanelles, (3) the acquisition of oil in Rumania, Iraq and the Persian Gulf, and ultimately in the Caucasus, (4) co-operation with Japan in the Far East. These are not four separate disconnected plans, but one great interlocking plan for the destruction of the British Empire and the sharing of the spoils.

Plan 1. Not satisfied with having broken through the blockade across the English Channel and extended his coast-line down to the Spanish frontier, Hitler now aims at obtaining the use of Atlantic ports at least as far as Dakar, and hopes by infiltration and by air to take over ports even farther south. From these he would attack the trade routes with surface raiders as well as submarines and aircraft. Already his naval surface vessels are successfully, though with some loss, seizing favourable moments to dart from port to port along the coast-line he controls.

Plan 2. Though Hitler's efforts to persuade General Franco to throw in his lot with the Axis seem so far to have failed, we must consider the strategic implications of Spain either becoming an active belligerent or giving the Axis all the help in her power short of going to war.

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A German occupation of the northern Spanish ports and their use for action in the Atlantic would be a relatively simple matter. But in the condition in which the economic organisation of Spain and its rail and road communications were left by the civil war, the difficulty of transporting large forces and their supplies to the south of the country would be great. Ships from the Mediterranean ports of France might, at considerable risk, succeed in slipping along the coast to Southern Spain. The main object of a southward move would be, of course, to close the Straits of Gibraltar. But to do that completely a belligerent requires a land force and aerodromes on both sides of the Straits and the use of the harbours of Ceuta, Tangier, Algeciras and Gibraltar as naval bases. In the event of German attack, as long as Gibraltar holds out, though we might not be able to utilise its harbour ourselves, we could deny its use to the enemy. We should also retain a base for interfering with his movements on the African side of the Straits. Even if Gibraltar were to fall (which there is no reason to expect), the Fleet would not be corked into the Mediterranean. We could not, however, prevent the enemy transporting large land forces to Africa, following the route by which Scipio advanced on Carthage.

Simultaneously with his approach to Franco, Hitler proceeded to put the screw on France. This is not the place to discuss these so-called negotiations: all we have to do is to note the strategic results. If Hitler gets his way at Vichy and if Frenchmen in the French African territories along the Mediterranean coast do not revolt against "collaboration" with Germany, all the naval bases, harbours and aerodromes on the French Mediterranean coasts—Ajaccio, Marseilles, Toulon, Oran, Algiers, Phillippeville, Bona, Bizerta, Tunis—and all their shipping and resources and aircraft may be at the disposal of the Axis. Although we may hope that French warships and aeroplanes will never be manned by Frenchmen against us, French aeroplanes and submarines and flotillas of smaller vessels, possibly even their cruisers, may be used by the enemy in the end. The previous article of this series

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described our success in acquiring or disabling the greater portion of the French Navy, but there is a considerable nuisance value in the remainder. Bizerta and Tunis, moreover, so close to Sicily and Italy, if they fall into the hands of the enemy, would greatly facilitate the sea passage of troops and supplies to Libya. That passage has been, and will continue to be, very hazardous for them; but in such narrow waters communication cannot be closed completely from a distant base, as it almost was when France was our active ally at those ports and aerodromes.

Thus these designs on Spain and France link up with the Italian threat to Egypt. The task of invading Egypt from Libya with the enemy in command of the sea is exceedingly difficult. Though sea command has never implied the stoppage of every vessel that attempts to run the gauntlet, it can expect to destroy large convoys or the constant use of a particular route. Graziani has found it necessary to advance by the coastal route which is in particular jeopardy from naval attack. Another great difficulty that hampers Graziani is water-supply. He has no Nile behind him to fill pipe-lines and reservoirs. The Italians are expert water engineers, but even the best can only produce the water that Nature supplies and develop its flow to the utmost. They cannot manufacture water. In peace the Libyan Colony imported water.

Under these circumstances there is only one method for an invading army to advance through the desert against a strong force awaiting it. It must keep the minimum force that safety permits at the front to guard an accumulation of water and munitions; then advance stage by stage, creating filled depots at each stage; and finally, at the last moment, rush forward the main invading force. If a large force is at the front all the time it consumes the supplies and no accumulation is possible. If the force at the front is small it risks annihilation. Sir Archibald Murray's advance from Egypt to Gaza and the construction of the railway and pipe-lines and depots which enabled Allenby to start his offensive is a typical example of

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how to solve the problem. But Murray had the Navy in command of the sea, he had the Nile to fill his pipe-line, he had a railway whose carrying capacity exceeded hundreds of lorries, and he had a negligible air force against him. Moreover, he had only 130 miles of desert to cross as against the 280 miles facing Graziani.

Early in September Graziani advanced across the western Egyptian frontier, 60 miles to Sidi Barrani. There he halted to form a depot and build a road behind him. He has extended his front by defended posts about 100 miles southwest to Jarabub so as to guard his lines of communication from raids by our mechanical forces. He has not at this date (November 18) advanced to the next stage which will bring him to our rail-head and roadhead at Mersa Matruh, where there is a considerable water-supply of great tactical value. There we have a substantial advance-force in a very strong position. Graziani is likely to have to pay a very big price, we hope too big a price, before obtaining Mersa Matruh; and, if he did get it, he would still be 200 miles from Alexandria, covered by our main positions in depth. He is a very energetic commander, experienced in African warfare. He has excellent mechanical equipment and weapons and good engineers, but the quality of his air force is not high. No doubt he can call upon strong reinforcements of German as well as Italian aircraft, but few commanders would care for Graziani's task. Perhaps he is not meant to achieve it. By merely threatening invasion he is tying down forces we urgently require elsewhere. And he is in a suitable place to take advantage of any weakening in our strength on that Egyptian frontier if operations in Syria and Palestine should develop unfavourably for us.

That brings us to further probable schemes for the conquest of Mediterranean shores. Germany has an almost negligible fleet. The Italians possess a fleet which, though it was formidable on paper in the number and design of ships of all types, yet dared not face ours even before it had been seriously weakened by the brilliant air-attack on Taranto (November 11-12) which disabled 3 battleships and drove 2 cruisers

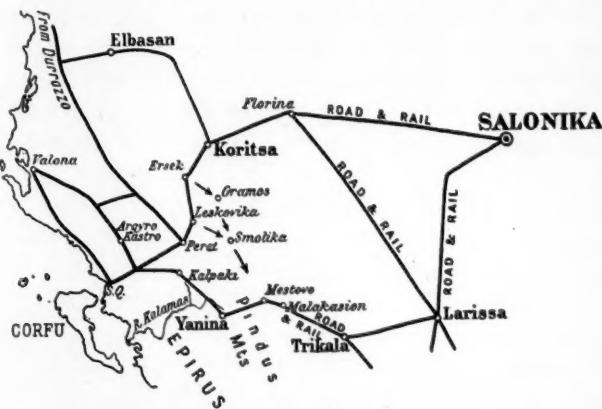
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ashore—a *coup* which, as Mr. Churchill said, has affected the entire naval situation in every quarter of the globe. More than ever now, therefore, the Axis desires to take action where its powerful army and air force can co-operate, like a boxer, not trained in every type of fighting, but skilled in delivering a special knock-out blow, for which he is always seeking an opportunity. It has been already explained how rapidly on “interior lines” they can transfer aircraft from France to Libya or the Balkans. The main strength of the Axis lies in the German Army. Italy has 85 divisions of still uncertain quality. Apart from the very long way round across the Caucasus, there are only three routes by which these land forces can reach North Africa with only a short sea passage—across the Straits of Gibraltar, from Sicily to Tunis, and across the Bosphorus and Dardanelles. This last is a long and difficult route, and the Turks stand across it, but it does eventually lead to the key of the whole Mediterranean and the East, Port Said, Suez and Egypt, and to the *oil* of Irak. It is obviously not a route that can be rushed. Advance must be step by step. The first step was the acquisition of Rumania with its oil and wheat and its ports at Constanza connected by rail with the Danube. Germany would like to acquire the rest of the Balkans for herself or her servant Italy by the same “peaceful” method of isolating and then devouring her unresisting prey. Like Bismarck, Hitler does not want to leave the bones of “Pomeranian Grenadiers” in the Balkans; nor does he want to turn these productive countries into a devastated war area, nor to disperse his strength into armies of occupation all over Europe from Norway to Thrace and to Spain. But he is quite prepared to leave plenty of bones, especially Italian ones, in the Balkans, if that is the only way to achieve his object.

Greece was next on the list. But she refused to submit to Rumania’s fate, when, on October 28, Italy delivered her ultimatum, confidently believing that Greece had no will to fight and in any case could not mobilise and concentrate her forces in time to stop the Italian divisions standing in readiness on the Albanian frontier. Only such convictions can

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explain Italy's action in starting such a hazardous deployment and advance in the mountains at such a late and unfavourable season of the year. At the time of the invasion the Italian forces in Albania exceeded 200,000 men, furnishing 10 divisions of varying strength and composition, one of them armoured, and including two cavalry regiments numbering 1,600. This force was based on the harbours of Durazzo and Valona with advance bases at Argyrokastro and Koritsa. The diagram



shows a lateral road running north-east just inside the Albanian frontier from the small harbour of Santi Quaranta to Koritsa and on to Florina. This lateral frontier road, an old Roman road improved and extended to Florina in the last war but still narrow, is reached by two roads from Durazzo to Koritsa and to Perat, and two roads from Valona to St. Quaranta and through Argyrokastro.

Obviously it was necessary for the Italians to secure the use of this road as a lateral communication working in safety behind their front, and therefore to advance to a sufficient depth to cover it, especially to Yanina and in the Pindus mountains.

They desired to penetrate the mountainous region rapidly so as to deploy their full force and the armoured division in

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the less unfavourable *terrain* of Larissa and Salonica. They hoped, therefore, to pass their 3rd Alpini division with some other units, making a force of about 25,000, at great speed through the narrow mountain defile in the Pindus range to Metsovo. If it had reached that place, it would probably have turned westward to Yanina, and worked its way to the rear or at least the flank of the Greeks resisting the Italian advance on the River Kalamas. Having thus broken Greek resistance on the west and using the now secure lateral road fed from Valona and Durazzo, the Italian command could have deployed larger forces *via* Yanina and Koritsa to the railheads in easier country at Melakision and Florina. This was an attractive strategical plan, but strategy requires to be served by tactical success. A strategist rushing into a house must not fall over the doorstep.

Meantime the Greek Government was showing that it was determined to fight and was far more ready to do so than the Italians had supposed. It mobilised its 10 divisions amounting to about 200,000 men and very quickly concentrated troops on the threatened frontier. In particular these troops were just in time to cork up the southern exit of the gorge of the Aoos river by which the 3rd Alpini division, having started from Ersek and Leskovika, hoped to reach Metsovo by way of Gramos and Smolika. Brave and very hardy soldiers in the mountains, the Greeks completely outmanoeuvred the Alpini, and practically destroyed at least four-fifths of the force which had started on this hazardous enterprise at an unfavourable season of the year. At the time of writing (November 18), Perat and Ersek on the important lateral frontier road, and Kalpaki, which threatens the Italians in Epirus, are in the hands of the Greeks. They appear to be making a general advance to exploit the disorganisation in the Italian Army. They may reasonably hope to secure a position covering the whole lateral road from St. Quaranta to Koritsa and Florina. Obviously there is a great advantage to the army which can secure the use of this lateral communication behind its front.

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The R.A.F. and the Fleet Air Arm have greatly helped the Greeks by bombing thoroughly the ports on both sides of the Adriatic, Valona, Durazzo, Brindisi, Bari and Taranto. Naples and other military objectives in Italy have likewise been bombed. The R.A.F. has also co-operated with the Greek army, bombing Italian troops in their very unfavourable situations on mountain roads.

On November 2 a British force was landed in Crete to establish a naval and air base at Suda Bay and other localities. The strategic importance of this move needs no explanation. Detachments have also been landed on the Greek mainland to furnish the ground staff and defence of aerodromes, the preparation of which will take some time.

It is important to note that, though the Italians may succeed in halting the Greek advance, and though perhaps the Greeks will consider it imprudent to carry it beyond the bounds suggested, yet it is now too late for the Italians to mount and deliver a new big offensive. Before the end of November we may expect to hear that the annual blizzard has swept over the country for several days, leaving the Albanian and Greek hills covered with deep snow and the low-lying parts of the country clogged with deep mud.

The Italians must now regret that they have enabled us to use the Greek mainland and islands as naval and air bases. This territory is of the utmost strategic importance for the naval control of the central and eastern Mediterranean. Graziani will soon feel the effect on his supplies and reinforcements. If we can manage to strengthen still further our air power in the Mediterranean, the effect in Libya, in Italy and in Rumania, and indeed in all the Balkans will be very great. The Axis had planned to seize all these advantages for themselves, but they have fallen to us. So far from the Axis being in a better position to squeeze Turkey we are now able to give greater assistance to that country if it needs it.

It must be emphasised again that these operations have obtained success by the co-operation of all the three fighting services. The Greek Army and a few detachments of British

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troops under the protection of the Navy and Air Force have secured all the territory on which the bases of all three services are operating within reasonable distance of their objectives. For the Air Force and the Navy those objectives are at a considerable but convenient distance.

Nevertheless, though the weak member of the Axis has received a severe blow, and we shall henceforth be delivering daily blows by sea and air on Italy itself, we must prepare for what Germany will now do. She can hardly acquiesce in this reversal of fortune for the Axis in the Balkans. The natural route for the conquest of Greece is not through Albania, but through Yugoslavia, from the Danube up the Morava valley through the important strategic railway junction of Nish and down the Vardar valley to Salonica. Other but less favourable routes are *via* the Danube and Rumania through Bulgaria down the Struma valley to Kavalla and Salonica, and by the Strumnitsa valley to Skolpje or by the Maritsa Valley to Dedeagatch. But if Bulgaria sides against Greece, Turkey is expected to attack Bulgaria. As already stated, the season is very late for campaigning in the Balkans. Not till late March will it again be favourable. Will Germany delay till then to test the attitude of Bulgaria and Yugoslavia and the effect thereon of the Greek victory and our exploitation of it?

Graziani is probably receiving orders to create a diversion now so as to tie down as many troops and aeroplanes in Egypt as he can. No one will envy him his task. But we must not risk loosening our hold on Egypt, or neglect the possibility of such powerful German and Italian air reinforcements reaching Graziani as would make our continued air support for Greece and air offensive from Greece very spasmodic. The Germans may try to draw forces from Egypt to the mainland of Greece as they drew us into Belgium, and then do everything possible to reinforce Graziani and strike in Egypt. The Italian forces in Abyssinia ("cut flowers in a vase") have been thrown on to the defensive at Gallabat and Kassala; but, if they are capable of reacting strongly, any temporary success

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they may or may not secure in the Sudan or Kenya should not divert one man from Egypt or Greece.

However badly the situation in the Balkans may develop, we can take and hold whatever strategic naval and air bases we want in the Aegean, Ionian or Mediterranean islands; and from those bases we can give vital support with all three fighting forces to Greece and at need to Turkey, though it will not be before next spring that our army can do much in those parts, nor can our air effort reach a great strength before then. Our improved position in the eastern Mediterranean, moreover, makes it highly improbable that the underground methods of the Axis in Syria, exploiting the "collaboration" of France, can lead to any definite military action of any importance in that country.

Plan 3. Rumanian oil has been acquired by Germany. If Plan 2, just described, were to succeed, the next stage would be a German advance from Aleppo to the Mosul oilfields in Iraq, with its pipe-lines running to the Mediterranean at Haifa and Syrian Tripoli. As to the oil near Ahwaz north of Basra, and the domination of the Persian Gulf, *via* the railway from Istanbul to Baghdad, much depends on the attitude of the Soviet Union and on how long Germany will find it necessary to continue bribing Stalin with the territory he wants in order that Germany may secure a position from which she can later enforce her demands on the Soviet. While Plan 2 is in operation, Germany would like to start Russians marching on Iran and Afghanistan to keep the still inadequate British forces dispersed instead of piling up in the Eastern Mediterranean and in Britain with a view to undertaking offensives from both these concentrations.

There are many influences at work in this world war which are rooted in the last one, and none more important than the memory in Russia of the terrible disasters she suffered in 1914 and 1915. In 1914 the Russians believed that the British Navy would be able to dominate the Baltic, and were bitterly disappointed that this proved to be quite impossible. Neverthe-

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less, by advancing before their mobilisation and concentration were complete, they saved France and helped to give to the Anglo-French armies the victory on the Marne, but at the cost of the stupendous defeat and slaughter at Tannenberg. Then, in November 1914, the Germans dropped their offensive at Ypres and turned on the Russians in great strength, to hammer them ferociously and continuously up to the end of 1915. Her arms and munitions exhausted, Russia was driven back on a long drawn-out retreat from Gorlice-Tarnow to Brest-Litovsk, suffering terrible losses and privations all the way. It was quite impossible then, and it has never been possible since, to convince the Russians that France and Britain could not have drawn the Germans away from the Russians and on to themselves. To put it vulgarly, they are not going to hold the baby again. When Britain and France and also Germany were courting Russia in 1939, we had nothing but blood and tears and sweat to offer them while we were preparing our forces for battle, but Germany was offering them large acquisitions of other people's territories. Stalin knew that the German offer of territory was not free-hold, but only short leasehold, yet presumably he said to himself: "If the Soviet Union can keep out of this war, and the two sides exhaust themselves completely in the struggle, who at the end of it will have the strength to take away from me what Germany is now giving me? Or prevent me from taking one or two other trifles we may want?"

If that is a correct interpretation of Stalin's reasoning, how does it affect the Axis Plans 2 and 3 as set out heretofore? Does it not explain Russia's surprising acquiescence in Germany's arrival on the Black Sea at Constanza and her domination of the Danube, except its mouths, near which Russia has gained a footing by her acquisition of Bessarabia? Has Germany gone as far as to promise the Russians that she will surrender the Bosphorus and Dardanelles to them after she has used them for defeating the British Empire? Surely the Russians would not expect that promise to be kept and must prefer that Turkey should remain guardian of these

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strategic straits. It would be in accordance with the Soviet desire for the mutual exhaustion of the belligerents, if Turkey were permitted to help Britain to stop Germany at the Tchataldja and Bulair Lines or, if driven from there, to fight on in Asia. But Russia does not want Britain in the Black Sea, and may think she would be hastening unduly the termination of the war if she were to use her influence and armed forces in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to assist Britain and Turkey to create a Balkan *bloc* which would stop the Axis *now* on the frontiers of Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Greece. It seems probable that Russia will continue to mark time, giving Germany a free hand to try out her Plans 2 and 3, and hoping that in defeating them the British Empire and Turkey will exhaust themselves and Germany also. She will not march on Iran and Afghanistan to help Germany any more than she will intervene in the Balkans to help Britain and Turkey, because either course would run counter to her desire for the prolongation of the war and the mutual exhaustion of the combatants.

Plan 4. The Triple Pact between the Axis and Japan was signed on September 27. The essence of it is contained in the following brief extracts: "Germany, Italy and Japan agree to co-operate . . . if one of the three contracting parties should be attacked by a Power at present not involved in the European War or in the Sino-Japanese conflict." "The aforesaid terms do not in any way affect the political status which exists at present as between each of the three contracting parties and Soviet Russia."

Baulked last July in obtaining the bulk of the French Navy, and feverishly anxious to loosen our blockade and tighten his, Hitler seeks to bring the Japanese fleet to his assistance. He thus hopes not only to draw away British warships eastwards, but also to retain the American fleet in the Pacific. He also expects the Japanese army and air force, co-operating with their navy, to prevent India, Australia and New Zealand from reinforcing Britain in the European area. Further, he

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obviously made the mistake of believing that the Pact would frighten the people of the United States, reduce the pace of their help to Britain, and strengthen the Isolationists. Of course, the American reaction was exactly the opposite.

Japan, for her part, expects the Pact to assist the policy on which, under militarist control, she embarked three exhausting years ago. This policy is to make Japan the dominant power in the Far East, including at least the whole of China, the Western Pacific and the Southern Seas in which lie Malaya and the Dutch East Indies. Japan expects all the resources and labour of this vast area to serve her interests, just as Germany expects Europe, Africa and the Middle East to serve hers. In pursuance of this megalomaniac policy Japanese strategy is first to break finally the resistance of the Chinese Government and the will of the Chinese people, and secondly to postpone to the future all questions in dispute with Russia so as to free the Japanese forces for the conquests of the Dutch, and portions of the British, Empires. By signing the Pact the Japanese obtained immediate German pressure on the Vichy Government to grant them peaceful entry to French Indo-China, which is now as completely in their power as Rumania is in Germany's. Also, by the obvious threat to Russia of attack from east and west in spite of the soothing words of the Pact, they expected to create a favourable atmosphere for an attempt to persuade Russia—a Japanese General is now in Moscow—to cut off the great help she has hitherto given to China. The obvious threat may be gilded with bribes of Chinese territory. Russia's response will doubtless be determined by her "exhaustion" policy.

After the signing of the Pact, while Germany and Italy trumpeted to the world the uselessness of the British Empire and America and China now continuing to obstruct the domination of the world by the Axis and Japan, there seemed to be a strong desire in Tokyo to soft-pedal this triumphant music. Japan's sole object, it was said, is to conquer China, and there will be no trouble for anyone who does not obstruct that operation. Japan, in fact, is desperately anxious to be

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left alone to achieve this essential prelude to all her subsequent programme. If she could not only force the Chinese Government but also the Chinese people to accept the "principle of collaboration" with Japan, as Germany is trying to get the French to collaborate with her, then Japan, like Germany, would cease to "sit on bayonets", and with Chinese resources at her disposal, supplemented by the resources of the southern seas, she could snap her fingers at those American embargoes which at the present moment are a veritable bowstring round her neck. If this string were pulled by the United States at any time before the conquest of China, it would economically and militarily strangle Japan almost at once. It appears, therefore, that Japan may not be thoroughly offensive and dangerous to us and to the United States until she believes she has finished with China. Obviously we must defy her threats and assist China in every way possible to continue her resistance up to the great victory we shall jointly achieve.

Meantime, Japan's occupation of French Indo-China is a strategic *coup* of the utmost importance, not only in its effect on China, but in its even greater potential effect against us.

As to China, it has enabled Japan to complete the blockade of all Chinese ports, including the transit of goods from Hong Kong to China, and it has closed the best carrying route hitherto supplying China by the French railway from Saigon to Kunming. The only other routes by which China can obtain the munitions to maintain her struggle are the Russian route from Kirghiz to Sian in Sinkiang, carrying only 20,000 tons per annum over 1,200 miles of very difficult terrain, and the Burma Road, 772 miles from Lashio to Kunming through mountainous country, carrying about 7,000 tons per month. Japan's present efforts to persuade Russia to close the Kirghiz route have been mentioned above. We reopened the Burma Road on October 18 and we are not going to close it again. The Chinese Government stated that they have already accumulated munitions sufficient to maintain their existing standard of resistance for another year. A great deal is going to happen in that year.

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As to the strategic effect of Japanese control of French Indo-China on her aspirations in the southern seas, Japan has acquired naval and air bases within 500 miles of the northern Malayan frontier and within 700 miles of Singapore. Japan completely dominates her neighbour Siam (Thailand) which has a common frontier with Malaya and with Burma. As Siam is a roadless, mountainous and jungle country with some plains and rivers, the capital (Bangkok) is Siam, and Siam is Bangkok, which is completely open to conquest from the sea. That is why our previous command of the sea caused the Siamese Government for very many years to turn to us for help and advice. The Siamese have an efficient air force whose numbers are not negligible. The neck of the Malayan isthmus, only 50 miles wide, is on the Siamese side of the frontier. There is a road across it connecting two small but very useful harbours, one on the China Sea and the other on the Indian Ocean. The strategic importance of these facts needs no emphasis.

The whole of the Japanese plan of domination is based upon command of the sea, backed by a large army and a considerable air force, operating close to their bases. With the command of the sea it would be exceedingly formidable. Without it, it collapses.

We started two years ago to build a battleship fleet, to be based on Singapore, Port Darwin and Sydney. What proportion of our fleet in Europe could now be diverted eastwards?* We have lost the assistance of the small but efficient French naval squadron in those waters. What assistance might we expect from the American fleet? What bases would the United States prepare for offensive naval action, if required, against Japan? Could Japan defeat one fleet before it joined the other? If so, would that action so cripple the Japanese fleet that it would be dominated by the fleet that has not fought? Those questions cannot be answered here and now.

* This question is affected by the action at Taranto.

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IV. THE BRITISH REPLY TO THE AXIS PLANS

IN the face of these formidable interlocking plans what is the British position at the time of writing (November 18)?

We have defeated the first attempt at invasion of this country and, if we are vigilant, we can defeat every subsequent attempt. We are confident that we can defeat all invasions of Egypt. So far so good; but that will not suffice to win the war. We have to seize the initiative and carry the war into the enemy's country.

We started the war with a very comfortable doctrine that we could do it with the Navy alone. All we had to do was to sit back, since the enemy would soon crack under the blockade. There are signs now of the growth of another doctrine—that the R.A.F. will do it all by bombing Germany. But that is also a doctrine of limited effort. It does not appreciate the magnitude of the combined effort which must be made by all our fighting services and Empire resources if we are to overcome the very great power of Germany. The Prime Minister has said that not till September 1941 will our Air Force be large enough to secure local superiority in numbers wherever and whenever that may be required in the widely spread theatres of war. A clear supremacy everywhere may be advanced somewhat in date by the proved superiority of our men and machines in the air. But there is no reason to suppose that Germans are any less tough than we are in standing up to bombardment. Germany and Italy, moreover, cover a much bigger area than Britain on which to deliver concentrated bombardment: their eggs are in many more baskets than ours. The ranges, too, to our targets average at least four times the ranges to theirs, and they have an enormous area into which to disperse their population for safety.

Great, then, though the damage may be which we can inflict by air attack, something more is needed for winning the war. From what has already happened on both sides, it is clear that it can only be won by *all three fighting services*, in proportion suitable to each particular operation, co-operating

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closely and continuously from *bases not too distant from the battle area*. Navies and air forces cannot be based on the sea or in the air; they are, like armies, based on land, and bases must be protected by the co-operation of all three fighting services. The *coup de grâce* in any battle and in the war itself must be delivered by the Army. If we apply that doctrine consistently and continuously to every strategical and tactical problem that confronts us, if we create situations in which the doctrine can be applied with great force, then final victory will be ours.

When we can take the initiative depends on the "bottle-neck" of equipment. About two years ago, when Mr. Churchill, in the course of his crusade to wake this country up, demanded a Ministry of Supply, he said that, as Minister of Munitions in the last war, his experience was "the first year very little, the second year something, the third year enough, the fourth year too much". The Navy and the Air Force are well into their third year, the Army and the forces from India and the Dominions and our Ministry of Supply are only just starting their second year. We have, moreover, to provide weapons and munitions not only for ourselves but also for the smaller nations who are now or may possibly be our allies. Munition supply is one of the chief features that determine a neutral's attitude. The productive effort needed, then, is vast; but the workers in this country are making a prodigious effort, and the American output is fast expanding. The Secretary of State for War, indeed, speaking on September 3, held out the hope that the "war of liberation" might begin next spring.

When it does begin, we shall not fight alone. Greece is already at our side. Other neutrals may follow her example. And we have strong and growing naval, marine, army and air force contingents of those older allies who were forced to retreat and re-form in this country. When we are ready and concentrated in great strength, and not before, when the Axis is sprawling all over Europe, and perhaps over part of Africa, holding down conquered peoples under their intolerable yoke, then we shall select suitable areas for powerful offensives, and

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the contingents of the conquered countries whom we bring with us will attract their compatriots in every country we enter. Their people will rally to their own standards, and we will arm and equip them and organise their resources for the common cause.

THE PROBLEM OF FOOD SHORTAGE IN EUROPE

I

THERE are two primary facts which must be remembered whenever the question of food relief on the Continent is considered. The first is the obvious but essential one that if the Nazis had not invaded their neighbours there would be no problem to consider. If the German troops were not in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Holland and France, not one of these countries would be faced with the threat of starvation. It is, therefore, a situation created by the Germans and one for which they are solely responsible. This has been vigorously expressed by Viscount Maugham, formerly Lord Chancellor, when he said in a letter to *The Times* on August 10, 1940: "If a belligerent dictator, with principles of humanity rather lower than those of the Huns, chooses to steal the foodstuffs of the countries which he and his hordes have overrun, no doctrine of either law or ethics requires us to supply or to assist in the supply of food to the occupied territories for the dictator's ultimate advantage."

The second point is that the problem is not limited to food alone, although for purposes of emotional propaganda this is the feature which is most frequently stressed. It equally concerns the supply of clothing, coal and petrol. In the last war it was the shortage of clothing during the hard winter months which affected the morale of the German soldiers and people almost as much as the restrictions on food. In the present war the clothing shortage in Germany is perhaps even more important than that of food. Thus, in a recent article in *The Times* (November 1), a neutral correspondent, describing conditions in Germany, said: "It is possible still to keep above the hunger line, though only few demands can really be satis-

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fied, but to manage on what the clothing cards allow requires clever artistry or recourse to hoards laid up in advance." A clothing card has 150 "points" a year. A dress requires 42, a man's suit 80, an overcoat 120 points, and the card must also serve for obtaining many household necessities. The purchase of all these essential goods is therefore restricted to the extreme limit. This shortage will become more severe in the near future because, although the Continent is largely self-supporting so far as foodstuffs are concerned, it is in great part dependent on foreign imports for its clothing material. Therefore every argument in favour of lifting the blockade on food is equally applicable to material for clothing and will be advanced with equal fervour if the former is relaxed. Here again we can rely on experience, as in the last war the German protests against the British action in making cotton contraband were nearly as vigorous as those against the so-called food blockade.

The same is true of petrol. It is not enough to ship food to the ports of the Continent—it must be distributed, and this requires large stocks of petrol. In the last war this problem of distribution was a difficult one even in so small a country as Belgium, but to-day, when so many countries rely in large part on motor transportation, it will be almost insuperable. It is hardly surprising that the Vichy Government has stated that if it cannot obtain more petrol the distribution of food in unoccupied France will break down.

To a smaller degree the problem will arise also in the case of coal. During the last winter the shortage of coal for household purposes was one of the major difficulties on the Continent. It may be even worse in the coming one. Therefore, if food is to be admitted to the occupied countries on humanitarian grounds, the same rule ought to apply to shipments of clothing material, petrol and coal.

This fact that so many other commodities are involved in the problem of the blockade may not, taken by itself, be an argument against relaxing the particular blockade on food, but from a practical standpoint it is very material and shows how

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complicated the whole problem is. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the debate on this subject should have wandered over so wide a field, and have included so many issues—legal, humanitarian, economic and strategic. It is with some of these that we must now deal.

II

IN the last war the discussions concerning the justifiability of the food blockade were largely legal in character, and were centred on the question whether the actions of the Allies constituted a permissible interference with the trading rights of the neutral nations. The chief protagonists in this debate were Great Britain and the United States, and the exchange of notes between them continued almost until the United States entered the war in 1917. The points there discussed involve such difficult and disputed questions in International Law that it is impossible to give more than the briefest outline of them here; but a few words must be said on the subject, as Germany to-day has repeated her former arguments that the blockade is in breach of International Law.

The odd fact is that the measures against which Germany and the neutral States protested most strenuously during the last war did not really involve the question of blockade in the legal sense. A blockade is the operation whereby a belligerent navy closes to commerce of all kinds the ports of its enemy, but this was only of minor importance, as the sealing of Hamburg and Bremen did not seriously affect German commerce. The essential thing was to prevent material which would help Germany in the prosecution of the war from reaching her through the neutral countries of Holland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden. This the Allies slowly but eventually succeeded in doing by exercising the right to intercept contraband goods.

That every belligerent has such a right has never been disputed, but the difficulty arises when an attempt is made to determine what things are included in the word *contraband*. Thus in 1856 the Declaration of Paris established the important

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principle that the neutral flag covers enemy goods with the exception of contraband of war, but no attempt was made to define this term. The difficulty is further increased by the doubtful distinction between absolute and conditional contraband. Absolute contraband covers articles which by their very character are destined to be used in war, such as guns and ammunition. Conditional contraband, on the other hand, covers articles which may be said to be of an ambiguous nature in that they may be destined to be used either in the prosecution of the war or for purely peaceful purposes.

Before 1914 it was generally held that foodstuffs were at most conditional contraband, and that it was necessary for the captor to prove that they were destined for the enemy's armed forces. This rule seriously hampered the attempt of the Allies during the first two years of the war to limit the amount of food which was imported into Germany; it was known that huge stocks did pour in through Denmark and Holland, but it was impossible to prove that they were to be used by the German Government. It was not until April 13, 1916, that the British Foreign Office announced that the circumstances of the war were so peculiar that for practical purposes the distinction between absolute and conditional contraband had ceased to have any value. It declared that as the enemy Government had taken control of all articles in the list of conditional contraband, foodstuffs would thereafter be deemed simply contraband. When the United States entered the war in 1917 she declared that "all kinds of fuel, food, foodstuffs, feed, forage, and clothing and articles and materials used in their manufacture" were contraband when "actually destined for the use of the enemy Government or its armed forces, unless exempted by treaty". Little foreign food reached Germany after this date.

Throughout the last war the German Government protested against the Allied interpretation of the doctrine of contraband, citing various statements made by the British Foreign Office in 1885, 1900 and 1904 in support of its view that foodstuffs could not be seized unless it were clearly proved that

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they were destined for the military forces. The Allies replied that the principle had not altered, but that, owing to the totalitarian character of modern war, food must now be regarded as serving a war purpose.

This view has now been accepted by the great majority of authorities on International Law. Professor Charles Cheney Hyde has stated this in words which have frequently been quoted:*

As war is now conducted, it is a probability rather than a possibility that foodstuffs imported into belligerent territory will serve a military end and so be used for a hostile purpose. It may be doubted whether, in a conflict greatly taxing the strength of the participants where the entire male population capable of bearing arms is called to the colors and where the power of requisition is lodged in and exercised by a central government, the necessary showing as to non-military use can be made.

When the present war began the British Government announced (September 4, 1939) that all kinds of foodstuffs, feed, forage, and clothing were conditional contraband. Argentina, Soviet Russia and some other States protested against the inclusion of foodstuffs in the contraband list, but the Allies did not weaken in their resolve to prevent the importation of food into Germany.

Since Germany invaded Denmark, Norway and Holland, the question of food as contraband has ceased to be of any practical importance as there are now few neutral countries which can act as ports for Germany. Food is now kept from Germany and the countries occupied by her by the fact that no ships can break through the cordon of British warships.

The German Government has therefore fallen back on another contention to support its claim that the food blockade is illegal. This is based on the argument that such a blockade is an attack on the civilian population and is an attempt to win the war by starving the German women and children. This same argument was used again and again during the last war by the German Government whenever it wished to justify

* Charles Cheney Hyde, *International Law chiefly as interpreted and applied by the United States*, 1922, vol. ii, p. 596.

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some particularly flagrant breach of International Law. Thus the sinking of the *Lusitania*, the bombing of undefended towns, the planting of floating mines, were all said to be in fair retaliation for Britain's murderous attack on the German civilian population. This argument has been used with renewed vigour at the present time, and though the basis of fact upon which it rests is Germany's own violation of neutral rights, it is useful to consider it at some length, especially as the blockade now concerns not only the Germans themselves, but also the unfortunate inhabitants of the occupied territories whose sufferings, according to the impudent, though ingenious, contention of the German propagandists, are due to British aggression. The answer depends on a consideration of the duty which a belligerent owes to the civilian population in the enemy country.

In Professor Oppenheim's classic work on *International Law* the rule concerning non-combatants is stated as follows:—"War nowadays is a contention of States *through their armed forces*. Those private subjects of the belligerents who do not directly or indirectly belong to the armed forces do not take part in it; they do not attack and defend; and no attack ought therefore to be made upon them." This is later stated more briefly as "the fundamental rule that non-combatants must not be made the object of direct attack by the armed forces of the enemy".

This does not mean, of course, that a non-combatant can complain if he suffers an injury which is incidental to a legitimate act of war by the belligerent because all such acts may injure non-combatants. The stock example is the bombardment of a fortress: it is obvious that a belligerent is entitled to shell such a fortress even though it may contain a certain number of women and children. Such an attack is not directed against them, and any injury which they may suffer is incidental and not intentional. On the other hand, an attack on a peaceful village is clearly unlawful as it is a direct attack on non-combatants.

* L. Oppenheim, *International Law*, 6th ed., vol. ii, p. 168.

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Can it be said that the British food blockade is a direct attack on non-combatants because as a result of it they may suffer hardship and perhaps even starvation? The answer is that the food blockade is not and is not intended to be an attack on the civilian population. Its purpose is to deprive the enemy of necessary war material either in the form of explosives, which are made from food fats, or of supplies which are essential for the armed forces and the workers in the war factories. The harm which the women and children may suffer is an incidental result and not one of the aims of the blockade. For that matter the less harm suffered by them the better because this means that the enemy has used his food in feeding them instead of making ammunition. This point can be made clear if we contrast the blockade with the indiscriminate aerial bombardment of the residential sections of London and other cities by the German air force. This bombardment, as the Nazi spokesmen themselves have announced, is intended to destroy the morale of the civilian population. Therefore the more civilians that are killed during an air-raid the more successful the attack can be said to be. When a bomb is deliberately dropped on the women and children of London, the purpose of the act is to kill those women and children. Their deaths are the desired object because through their suffering the country will be terrorised, and thus induced to make peace. This is a direct attack on the civilian population as such and is therefore illegal under International Law as recognised by the civilised States. On the other hand, any injury which the food blockade may do to the civilian population is at most an indirect result of the legitimate purpose to deprive the enemy of ammunition and supplies. Such an act has always been regarded as legal by International Law: if it were not a recognised form of warfare, then every siege would have to be abandoned on the ground that it was an attack on the women and children in the city. The German claim that the British blockade is illegal therefore has no foundation in International Law.

On the other hand, the Germans are threatening the people

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of the occupied territories with starvation by seizing their reserves of food. This is in direct breach of International Law. When it suits their purpose the Germans deny that they owe them any duty and say that it is no concern of theirs whether the inhabitants starve or not. This doctrine is in conflict with Article 43 of the Hague Regulations of 1907 which provides that: "After the legal authority has actually passed into the hands of those occupying that country, the latter are under the obligation to take all measures possible to maintain public order and safety." The Nazis have recently denied that this includes any duty to feed the inhabitants, but in 1916 the Germans took a different view. It was then that they deported Belgian and French civilians from the occupied territories, and, in breach of the long-established rule of International Law, forced them to work in the German fields. They justified this in an official statement* on the ground that this step was necessary in the interest of the subject peoples themselves. They referred to Article 43 of the Hague Regulations, and then continued:

There is no doubt that provision for the insuring of the feeding of the population belongs to the work of maintaining public order and public life. But owing to the circumstances prevailing this could only be done through the agricultural output of the occupying territory itself. In the case at hand, the only way to do away with a state of distress was to compel a part of the population to work in their own interest. Appeals having been made to the inhabitants to volunteer for work in the regions where their services were needed, without satisfactory response, the German authorities were justified in resorting to compulsion, and in view of the fact that the harvesting season was rapidly advancing and in view of the increasing shortage created by the internationally illegal English blockade, it was necessary to act energetically and quickly.

It is unfortunate that the Germans fail to recognise this duty to feed the inhabitants when it is against their interest to do so.

* See on this point J. W. Garner, *International Law and the World War*, 1920, vol. ii, p. 168.

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III

FROM the standpoint of International Law there is therefore no ground whatsoever for saying that the Allied blockade is illegal either in general or in so far as it relates particularly to food. This does not, however, dispose of the problem because it is not always fair or wise to insist too strictly on one's legal rights. The further important question therefore arises whether the British Government ought on humanitarian and political grounds, which include matters of military strategy, to maintain the blockade.

The answer to this question involves many different considerations, but the solution is clear. Two points in particular must, however, be determined before we can reach a conclusion: (1) is there any danger of starvation on the Continent this winter? and (2) what effect will the blockade have on the enemy's war effort?

The enquiry whether there will be a severe food shortage on the Continent this winter is at the outset made difficult to answer owing to the conflicting statements made by the German Propaganda Ministry. When it suits their purpose to state that there is no danger of a food shortage the Nazis will not hesitate to assert that the British blockade has proved ineffective, and that, in any case, the Continent is completely self-supporting. Thus, as it is probable that one of the reasons which has induced Spain to maintain her neutrality is her shortage of food supplies, the Nazis have stated that there can be no danger of starvation in Spain if she joins the Axis because Germany can supply her with the necessary food.* On the other hand, when the Vichy Government states that there is grave danger of starvation in unoccupied France, the German reply is that this is due to the British blockade, and that the food in occupied France, which is normally sufficient to feed the whole country, must be used in part to feed the army of occupation.

Moreover, as the German Government has excluded all

* *Daily Telegraph*, Nov. 23, 1940.

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neutral observers from the territories occupied by her, it is impossible to obtain any authoritative reports as to the conditions there. Never before in the history of the world has there been so strict a censorship over so large a territory. All judgments must therefore be based on information which cannot be accurately checked. Estimates of the conditions, even though made by experts, must thus be used with caution.

Two points, however, are clear. The first is that there is no danger this winter of any food shortage in Germany itself. Before the autumn of 1939 she had laid down large reserves of food in preparation for the coming war, so that, even under adverse conditions, there would now still be enough for 1941. Circumstances have, however, not been adverse. The 1940 harvest is said to be only slightly below the average, and there is no doubt that large additional stocks of food have been brought into Germany from the countries occupied by her. Moreover, a large part of her army is now quartered in occupied territory, and is being fed almost entirely on food commandeered there. The result is that the German people, in spite of war, are now enjoying a better standard of living than they have been accustomed to since the Nazis came into power in 1933.

The second point is that under normal conditions there is sufficient food in Europe to feed the whole population without the need for importing any from abroad. Before the war the Continent was almost self-supporting in so far as most of the essential foodstuffs were concerned. The average wheat harvests amounted to 40,240,000 tons, while the normal annual requirements were 43,920,000 tons. Even this slight excess of requirements over supply was not a necessary one, as many of the countries, especially Germany, Italy and France were laying in large reserves in case of war. How large these reserves were it is difficult to say as no figures were published, but to judge from Germany's statement that she has enough reserve food to enable her to face a four-year war without difficulty, they must have been very substantial. The Continent is equally self-sufficient in the case of the other grain

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crops, especially of rye which is such an important bread-grain on the Continent. Here the average harvest is 18,560,000 tons, while the requirement is only slightly higher at 19,190,000 tons.*

In two other essential foodstuffs Europe is substantially self-sufficient. It is not necessary for her to import potatoes as, except after abnormally bad harvests, there is no possibility of a shortage here. In sugar, owing to the great recent development of the beet-sugar crop, the Continent is 92 per cent. self-sufficient, and especially large reserves of imported sugar have been built up.

The most important deficiency is that of fats. The annual deficiency of animal, vegetable and marine oils is about 40 per cent. Moreover, the reserves of fat are less than those of other foodstuffs owing in part to difficulties of storage but especially to the fact that so much of it has been used in the manufacture of explosives during the past seven years. Although it would have been possible for the Germans in this period to enjoy a balanced diet, the Nazis have preferred to use their butter to feed the guns.

For such non-essentials as coffee and tea the Continent depends entirely on foreign imports. The lack of these is a source of serious inconvenience as they add greatly to the attractiveness of the ordinary diet, but their absence cannot affect the health of the people.

It follows that in ordinary circumstances the Continent is substantially self-sufficient so far as essential foodstuffs are concerned. No blockade, however complete, could by itself affect the health of the Continental peoples, much less bring them to the point of starvation. Their diet would lack variety but it would be sufficient for them to maintain their full physical strength. Not a single woman or child would therefore need to suffer if the blockade were the only element which affected the present situation, but that is not the case. There are other factors which are of more immediate importance.

There is first of all the fact of the war itself. In Holland,

* R. W. B. Clarke, *Britain's Blockade* in the *Oxford Pamphlets on World Affairs* series.

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Belgium and France the armies have been fighting this year in the wheat fields with the result that part of the crop has been destroyed. Moreover, in all Continental countries, whether belligerent or not, less land than usual was under cultivation as so much necessary farm labour had been conscripted into the armies. It is impossible to obtain any authoritative estimate of the total reduction which has resulted from these causes, but the best opinion seems to be that the 1940 bread-grain harvest will be about 15 per cent. less than that of 1939. It is obvious that such a reduction cannot seriously affect the diet of the people, especially as the food reserves which had been created for just such a situation can now be used. We must, therefore, look to other causes for the starvation which is now threatening some of the occupied countries. Let us note, to begin with, a passage in Hitler's speech to the Reichstag on July 19, 1940, in which he enlarged on the resources which had been made available to Germany in the territories she had conquered. "Thanks to measures adopted in time", he said, "the food-supplies are guaranteed, however long the war may last."* To understand what this means it is convenient to consider the situation in each country separately.

The striking thing is that the country which is suffering most at the moment is the one which is the largest producer of food. Poland before the war exported wheat, rye, potatoes, cattle and poultry, as her average harvests were more than her requirements. The harvest estimate for 1940 shows that there will probably be a decrease of about 25 per cent. in the production of wheat and rye. The dreadful war ravages of 1939 are partly the cause of this, but it is mainly due to the catastrophic changes which the Nazis have introduced into the country since they took control. Over a million Poles, including prisoners of war and civilians, on the statement of the Germans themselves, have been deported to work on the German farms with the natural result that Poland's ordinary farm economy has been thrown completely out of gear. In spite of this those who have remained have struggled bravely to pro-

* *The Times*, July 20, 1940.

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duce a harvest which ought to be enough to feed the inhabitants. Why then are the present rations in Poland the most inadequate of those in any of the conquered countries? When compared with the German rations it will be seen that the Polish figures for fats are one-quarter, for sugar and meat one-half, and for bread three-quarters of the German ones. The answer is that in Poland the Nazi rule is at its most ruthless, and all food which is not required to keep the people from actual starvation is seized for German consumption. Gauleiter Greiser has recently boasted that the Warthegau, which had never before exported more than 200,000 tons of wheat, had exported this year 700,000 tons to Germany.* Whether even this limit will be observed in the future is uncertain if the Germans proceed with their plan to destroy the Polish nation. In this connection it is well to remember the proclaimed Nazi doctrine that the Poles are a lower race. "A lower race", said Dr. Ley, Head of the Labour Front, last January, "needs less room, less clothing, less food and less culture than a higher race. The German cannot live on the same lines as the Pole and the Jew."†

In Czechoslovakia the conditions are only slightly better than they are in Poland. Here again it is important to remember that the country was fully self-supporting before it was seized by the Nazis. Although Czechoslovakia exported wheat in 1938, at the present time the weekly ration is only 44 grammes, although the German ration is 80 grammes.

Before the war Denmark was one of the largest producers of food, especially bacon, butter and eggs, but she imported a considerable amount of wheat amounting to about 250,000 tons. At the present time the Danish ration is nearly equal to that of the German, though much below the peace-time standard, but how long this conciliatory attitude will continue is difficult to say. Hitler's expressed doctrine on this point is significant.

A shrewd conqueror [he said in *Mein Kampf*‡] will always enforce his exactions on the conquered only by stages, as far as that is pos-

* *Frankfurter Zeitung*, Oct. 7, 1940.

† *Angriff*, Jan. 31, 1940.

‡ P. 759, German edition.

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sible. Then he may expect that a people who have lost all strength of character—which is always the case with every nation that voluntarily submits to the threats of an opponent—will not find in any of these acts of oppression, if one be enforced apart from the other, sufficient grounds for taking up arms again.

Holland also was a food-exporting country before she was invaded, although she had to import about 600,000 tons of wheat annually. Her standard of living was perhaps the highest of any country in Europe; moreover, she had laid in large reserves of food. When Germany invaded her these reserves proved to be welcome booty. In the first week 17,600,000 lb. of butter, about 99 per cent. of the total reserves, were removed. The same thing happened in varying degrees to other stocks of food, clothing and raw materials. At the moment the ration is about the same as the German one, but there are reports that it is difficult to obtain the full ration allotment. By refusing rations to the unemployed workers, Germany is forcing a considerable number of them to agree to work in Bremen and Hamburg.

In Norway the Nazis are making a special effort to persuade the population to welcome the "New Order", and as Germany depends on the Norwegian fishermen for most of her fish provisions, any too harsh treatment might seriously affect this source of supply. Moreover, as Dr. Morgenstierne, the Norwegian Minister to the United States, recently stated, Norway at the time of the invasion had over a year's stocks of food and other necessities.* As a result the Norwegian rations at present are almost exactly at the German level.

The position of Belgium is a precarious one as she has always been a highly industrialised country depending to a large extent on foreign imports of food. Her annual requirements of wheat before the war amounted to over a million tons. Her agriculture has also received severe war damage, and great numbers of her cattle are said to have been seized by the invaders. At the present time the Belgian bread ration is the lowest in any of the western occupied territories and the

* *Nordisk Tidende* (New York), Oct. 17, 1940.

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sugar ration is also at a dangerous level. The Belgians, after their bitter experiences during the last war, had laid in some reserves of essential food, but it is probable that most of these have been taken. As a result there will probably be a serious shortage this winter.

It is particularly difficult to assess the position in France at the present time owing to its artificial division into the occupied and unoccupied parts. Before the war France was almost entirely self-sufficient as far as bread-grain was concerned, her annual wheat harvest being 7,780,000 tons, while her requirements were 7,910,000 tons. She was nearly self-sufficient in sugar, being one of the world's largest producers of beet-sugar. Her other agricultural produce was also substantial. Moreover, it had for some years been part of her policy to build up reserves of food in case of war. In ordinary circumstances, therefore, there ought not to be any danger of food shortage in France, but the fears expressed concerning her future are certainly not groundless. Owing to the war the estimated wheat harvest for 1940 is nearly a million tons less than that of 1939, and an equally serious falling-off in the beet-sugar crop is expected. These shrinkages, although serious, would not by themselves produce anything resembling famine conditions, but it has been the German policy to take large amounts of food out of the country. Exact figures cannot, of course, be given, but it is reliably estimated that nearly a million tons of wheat have been commandeered. Shortly after the armistice the Germans themselves announced that 140 railway trucks filled with food were leaving southern France. This process has continued to the present time, it being reported that over a million pigs were seized in September. A further drain on the already strained French resources has been caused by the German demand that its huge army of occupation should be supported almost entirely from the French food stocks. This is in accord with the traditional German military doctrine that "war must support war", even though the result may be that the conquered population will suffer starvation.

A further, and perhaps more serious reason for France's

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distress is, however, the division between occupied and unoccupied France. The line between the two was cleverly drawn by the Germans because by far the largest part of the French food-producing districts is now in Nazi hands. If this were merely a question of political control the division would not be so serious in its effects provided that freedom of trade between the two parts were still allowed, but an impenetrable wall between the two has been established with the result that unoccupied France is now cut off completely from its natural granaries. Exactly the same plan was adopted by the Germans in the last war when they divided Poland into two parts, the one being industrial and the other agricultural. When the industrial part was threatened with famine, the German Government claimed that it was the Anglo-French blockade which was starving the Polish women and children.*

If to-day the Germans removed the artificial barrier they have created between the two parts of France the food difficulty would be materially lessened. There would still remain, however, the problem of distribution. France is more dependent on motor transport than is almost any other country in Europe, but this has come to an almost complete standstill as the Germans have seized most of the French petrol reserve. Unless these supplies are materially increased, it is certain that transport difficulties will prevent a fair distribution of the available food.

The answer to the question whether there will be a food shortage this year in France depends therefore entirely on the Germans themselves. There need be no hardship if the barrier between occupied and unoccupied France is removed, if the Germans stop commandeering the French food reserves, and if the petrol seized after the armistice is released. To say, therefore, that the present situation has been created by the British blockade is to use language in a novel sense. If A knocks B down and robs him of his food, can C (of whom A is also an enemy) be said to be responsible for B's distress

* On this point see Professor A. L. Goodhart, "The Problems of Food Relief", in the October 1940 issue of *The Fortnightly*.

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because he refuses to allow more food to be sent to B, when he knows that A will probably seize the major part of it again? If this were true then a bullying nation need only knock down enough small ones in order to be supplied with food gratis and for ever by charitably minded persons from abroad.

This dreary catalogue leads to the inevitable conclusion that there need be no serious shortage of food this year in any Continental country provided that Germany distributes in an equitable manner the resources at her disposal, including of course the petrol needed to transport them. To expect the Nazis to act in this way may, however, be to take too optimistic a view of the German character, and it is thus probable that there will be serious food shortages in some of the Continental countries this winter, especially in Poland, Belgium and France. (The possibility of a relaxation by Germany of this stringency on grounds of self-interest is discussed below.)

IV

WE therefore come to the last and most difficult question which this problem involves: Ought the food blockade to be lifted for the sake of the people in those occupied countries which will be in greatest need, even though the blockade still remains in force against Germany?

Other things being equal it would obviously be to Great Britain's interest, entirely apart from all questions of humanity, if foodstuffs could be admitted to the occupied territories. In some areas at any rate, it would lighten the burden of the blockade as it would not be necessary to keep such an extended watch on all shipping, for if food ships were allowed through there would be less temptation to run the blockade. Of greater importance is the point that it would destroy Germany's most popular propaganda weapon. The more effective the blockade becomes the more strenuous will be the attempt made by the Nazis and their satellites to place the blame for the food shortage on the British Government. This threatened shortage is the most serviceable argument

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the Nazis have with which to persuade the peoples they have invaded that an immediate peace is necessary, however shameful and destructive of all hopes for the future such a peace might be.*

Unfortunately, however, other things are not equal, and it is impossible for the British Government, for clear and cogent practical reasons, to adopt this otherwise desirable course. In the present circumstances it is essential that the complete blockade should be maintained. The suggestion has indeed been made by certain persons, who claim that a relaxation of the blockade in favour of some of the countries now under Nazi control would in no way injure the Allied cause, that food should be admitted to the occupied countries and to unoccupied France on the German guarantee that she would not seize it for her own purposes. When it was pointed out that the Germans might benefit indirectly by seizing the home-produced food, while leaving the inhabitants to live on the food that was imported, it was suggested that the guarantee should also cover this situation. Unfortunately such a guarantee would be of no practical value. It is hardly necessary in this connection to point out that, taken by itself, Germany's word would be completely worthless. The only possible method would be to bring into the territory a large force of neutral observers who would furnish a check both on imported and home-grown food. They would have to be given wide powers of inspection, which would be incompatible with the Nazi system. Even in the last war Germany put repeated obstacles in the way of the Belgian Relief Commission and

* An illustration of this type of propaganda is the frequently repeated statement that the British Government hopes that the food blockade will so weaken the people on the Continent that epidemic diseases may spread this winter. His Majesty's Government therefore sent on September 14, 1940, to the Secretary of the International Red Cross Committee at Geneva a note stating that it was prepared to facilitate the importation of medical supplies destined for the assistance of the sick and wounded. The only limitation made was that these supplies must not be used for other purposes. The Government had not forgotten that in the last war Germany had imported materials of war under the guise of medical supplies.

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attempted time and again to obtain food which was intended for the distressed population. It was only the personal authority and courage of Mr. Hoover which prevented the system from breaking down. In the present war the Nazis are unrestrained by neutral opinion, so even that slender control would be lacking. As a leader in *The Times** has put it: "No neutral influence restrains Hitler and his confederates; and no form of neutral control could be devised which would afford the slightest guarantee against abuse of any philanthropic enterprise."

Moreover, if the food were once sent into the occupied countries there would be nothing to prevent the Germans from repudiating their promises at the last moment and from seizing the food which had been imported. This happened in the last war in 1918 when the Germans realised that they were face to face with defeat.

But, it may be said, why is it so important to keep this food out of Germany? If she already has sufficient reserves for her own population, what difference would a comparatively small addition make? The answer is that every ounce of additional food is of value to the German war machine.

In the first place, most of the essential foods are directly convertible into war material. Fats are very largely used in making propellants. Butter, lard, bacon and oil-seeds can be turned directly into munitions, and they have been used for this purpose by the Nazis during the past seven years, even though this meant a severe restriction on the people's diet. Wheat, potatoes and sugar can be used to produce alcohol, which is a particularly necessary war material as it can be employed as a fuel for lorries and tanks and as a solvent for high explosives. There is, thus, hardly any form of foodstuff which is not of use, directly or indirectly, for the production of war material.†

In a less direct but in an equally important way the importa-

* Aug. 13, 1940.

† Cf. Sir William Beveridge, *Blockade and the Civilian Population* (Oxford Pamphlets).

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tion of food would be of service to Germany by increasing her available man-power. This war is one largely of machinery. If numbers alone counted, then the position of Great Britain, even with the help of the Empire, would seem to be almost hopeless against the forces of Germany and Italy. Fortunately, however, the contest has in large part become one between the trained industrial populations. Here there is no such disparity at the present time between Germany and the British Commonwealth, and in the background there is always the rapidly developing power of the United States. Germany is therefore strenuously attempting to increase the number of her available working men, but it is difficult for her to do this so long as a major part of her man-power has to be employed in agriculture. Before the war the total labour-force required to feed the German people was about 9,500,000 persons, while in Great Britain the agricultural and fishing industries employed about 1,400,000 persons. It is for this reason that Germany has imported nearly a million men as forced labour from Poland. The blockade, by forcing Germany to grow her own food, is therefore directly limiting the number of men whom she can transfer into industry.*

The third reason for Germany's strenuous attempts to obtain more food is that the more satisfactory the food ration is the better will be the morale of the soldiers and of the civilian population. Although at the moment the German army is not fighting in the field, it has to undertake the unenviable task of policing the occupied territories, and there are well-authenticated reports that the discipline of the German soldiers is deteriorating under the strain. The Nazis have promised the army an early peace. A long war will shake its confidence in their leadership, especially if an inadequate diet affects the spirits of the soldiers.

For these reasons it is essential that no additional foodstuffs should fall into German hands. To allow imported foodstuffs to be sent into territory occupied or controlled by Germany would be to take a risk with perhaps the most immediately

* Geoffrey Crowther, *The Sinews of War* (Oxford Pamphlets).

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effective weapon which the Allies possess. It was because of this that, in the last war, France and Great Britain felt themselves unable to raise the food blockade on Poland even though the conditions in that country were described as desperate. They felt that it was necessary that this hardship should be inflicted on their Ally rather than that the war should be lost. The Poles have never grudged the sacrifice they then made for the sake of their own freedom.

V

SO far we have been assuming that Germany will persist in her policy of not allowing the foodstuffs she controls to enter Belgium and unoccupied France, but there is a strong possibility that she will not maintain this policy. When she finds that her bluff has failed and that she cannot force other countries to feed the victims she has robbed, she may find herself compelled to return to them the food reserves which are necessary to keep them from hunger. This will not be done from any humanitarian motives, which are not recognised in the German war doctrine, but will be due to the most obvious considerations of self-interest.

It is in Germany's direct interest that the industrial machinery in the countries she controls should be started working again as soon as possible. In his speech to the Reichstag after the fall of France, quoted earlier in this article, Hitler made much of the economic reinforcement which the Axis had obtained by conquest. "From the spheres of economic interest under their control", he said, "Germany and Italy have at their disposal 200,000,000 people, among whom . . . over 70,000,000 are engaged in purely economic activities." This industrial reinforcement, which is to be the counter-weight to that given by the United States to the Allies, will hardly be of much value unless the workers are capable of putting forward all their energies. This is impossible if they are starving. Nor will it be sufficient to feed only the workman himself: if his family is short of food he will insist on sharing his

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rations with them. It is therefore in Germany's own interest to see that the food supply in the occupied countries does not fall below the level of efficiency.

From another standpoint, too, it is equally essential for Germany, in her own interest, to guard against starvation on the Continent. German propaganda has for long been based on the claim that the Germans are remarkably efficient whereas the ineffective British are about to collapse. In accordance with this policy the entire British fleet has been destroyed on paper. Moreover, members of the Fifth Column in the various countries which the Nazis have invaded have continuously preached that this "New Order" would bring prosperity and peace. Now these men are forced to explain why the British Navy has not been sunk and why the "New Order" is not functioning as efficiently as had been promised. The more serious the food shortage becomes, the more difficult will these explanations be. Sooner or later the enslaved peoples of Europe will rise against their conquerors, but this will only come when they realise that the Nazi colossus has feet of clay. Germany may therefore find it impossible to allow these people to approach starvation because such a step would be too serious a blow to her prestige.

But even if Germany should decide that it is more in her interests to pursue throughout the Continent the ruthless policy of exploitation which she has adopted in Poland, and to continue the withholding of foodstuffs from France and the other countries which she has acquired, this will not weaken the British resolve to maintain the blockade. The Poles have shown in this war, as in the last, that their country is prepared to face every disaster rather than surrender. It was in the last war also that French artillery bombarded French cities so as to drive the Germans from their walls. It is in this spirit that the French will accept the blockade when they realise how essential it is to victory. Just as the citizens of London are prepared to face the German bombs, so the citizens of France will be prepared to face the German hunger rather than to surrender the future of their country into Nazi hands.

THE HOME GUARD

THE story of the Home Guard will probably go down to posterity as one of the most remarkable episodes in the long history of the British Army.

The broadcast that served as the call for its birth was made by the Secretary of State for War in mid-May of 1940, and it came at a critical moment in the second world war. Holland had been completely, and Belgium all but completely, overrun by the tide of Nazi invasion; France was faced by the prospect of a military defeat of the first magnitude, in which our own British Expeditionary Force was involved, and from which it seemed improbable that it could possibly be extricated as a fighting force. To those who credited the enemy with doing what was wisest for him and most hurtful for us, it seemed almost certain that the destruction of the B.E.F. would be followed by an attempt to strike this country down by invasion, and our defences were at that moment in poor condition to resist such a blow. There were indeed a large number of troops at home, but many of these had only been a few weeks with the colours, and there was a grave deficiency of arms, of uniforms, of equipment, of munitions, of transport, in fact, of everything which distinguishes a modern army from a scratch collection of soldiery. There were no defences for aerodromes, for landing-places on the coast from the sea, or for places inland where parachute troops might come to ground. There were known to be subversive elements in the country which, though relatively small and weak, were only awaiting the arrival of invasion to attempt that stab in the back which had been so fatal to Norway, to Holland and to Belgium, and was, in a few weeks' time, to prove fatal to France also.

The Germans, with a mighty and victorious army on the farther shore of the Channel and a great air force ready to

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cover its crossing and support its operations on our soil at short range, had an excellent chance of striking us down by a thrust at the heart and ending the war with a thunderous and decisive victory. The peril in fact was acute, and the country was unready to face it. Yet there had been left, as a precious relic of the first world war, hundreds of thousands of men who had learned to be soldiers then and had not forgotten the art now, but who, in this young man's war, had not yet found their place in the incomplete edifice of the nation in arms. It was to these that the urgent call to service now came.

It was a call that made the heaviest demands upon these patriotic men. It was, in fact, a summons to give up all their spare time to their country's service, without reward of any kind save the consciousness of duty done. They were asked to form, in every town and village over the length and breadth of the land, little units of Local Defence Volunteers, as they were first to be termed. These were simply to be bodies of citizens in arms. The central organisation was bound to be of a rudimentary order, and reliance was almost entirely placed upon local initiative and local patriotism. There were to be no distinctions of rank, no hierarchy of command, no officer or non-commissioned officer badges; and organisation and discipline, in the ordinary military sense, would have to be worked in a spirit of goodwill, of give and take, and of service for the high cause. There would inevitably be a general shortage of arms, of ammunition, of uniforms, of transport and of accommodation. All these grave deficiencies would have to be remedied by makeshift and by the use of local resources exploited by local initiative. It was, in fact, a call to make military bricks without straw.

The response was astonishing. Hardly had the announcement been made over the wireless than men were flocking to enrol at police stations, which had had no word of their coming save where the police officers themselves had happened to listen to the broadcast. Within a few days the numbers who had thus offered their services already ran into

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thousands, and these numbers were daily, almost hourly, increasing. It seemed that everybody who could join was rushing to do so. General officers and field officers, who had served with distinction in the Great War, came in dozens to shoulder a rifle (if they could get one) and serve as simple volunteers in the new corps. Old soldiers of every rank from sergeant major to private came in their thousands to serve beside them. They came from all walks of civil life—from the fields, the farms, the shops, the offices and the factories, where they were doing full-time civilian work by day, to give their nights, their holidays and their week-ends to their country's service. Many others, young and old, who had never served in arms, came to learn the new trade of soldiering with zeal and enthusiasm to make good their lack of experience and knowledge. Astonishing feats of improvisation and extemporised organisation were carried out throughout the length and breadth of the country to make the little Local Defence Volunteer companies swiftly ready and fit to perform the duties entrusted to them. In a surprisingly short space of time these companies were established as going concerns. They were deficient in almost everything. Their arms were of the most heterogeneous order; for many there were no arms at all. Supplies of ammunition were equally variegated. It was weeks before many of the volunteers saw any sort of uniform except the L.D.V. arm band which they wore on duty. The urgently necessary minimum transport had to be improvised, but the bulk of the men, in addition to their normal duties, had to walk or bicycle to their place of assembly and back again, usually in the dying rays of sunset or in the first blush of dawn. Yet the machinery took shape, and the Local Defence Volunteers (soon to be renamed the Home Guard) slipped into their places as part of the country's organisation for home defence. One striking testimony to their value, at once alarming and encouraging, was given by the enemy, who threw out over his wireless accusations that the new force was a body of *franc-tireurs*, mere bandits in arms, outside the laws of war who, if ever they had the mis-

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fortune to meet the invincible German army, would be given no quarter, but would be shot at sight. These threats in no way disturbed the equanimity of the average Home Guardsman, who, probably familiar with the proverb about catching the hare, felt confident of being able to give a good account of himself before becoming liable to all these terrific penalties. So far from having, as the enemy no doubt hoped, the effect of discouraging recruiting, these threats had exactly the opposite result. The new force was something of which the enemy were undoubtedly afraid, and that fact alone made it worth joining and enhanced its prestige.

By the time that the men of the B.E.F., rescued by a miracle from the beaches of Dunkirk, were re-equipped and redistributed for defence against invasion, France had surrendered and Britain was left alone to face a triumphant enemy. By this time, too, the Home Guard was at work all the country over. Bodies of men were at their posts at industrial and public utility establishments, ready for hostile parachutists or Fifth Columnists, should they arrive bent on sabotage. Towns and villages were patrolled throughout the hours of darkness by men who knew every street and every corner, every field and every lane. A network of fortified posts, blockhouses, barricades and road blocks, many of them sited and erected by the Home Guards themselves, had been set up to entangle and impede the advance of any invader. The night sky was watched for parachutists so keenly and vigilantly that even British pilots baling out from their machines were instantly surrounded by ready and suspicious Home Guardsmen, and many a German airman who had been shot down fell into their hands almost as soon as he touched earth.

The Home Guardsman's lot, even on warm summer nights, was no easy one. Discomfort, weariness, boredom and the strain of continual watching and readiness for something that did not happen were his constant foes. He overcame them with the same cheerfulness, stoutness and patience with which he would have encountered the enemy in the flesh, had that enemy ever set foot on British soil. For weeks the Home Guard waited

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for him, but he never came. The year 1940 passed from high summer to the mists and mellowness of autumn, and then to the first fogs and frosts of winter, and, as the months passed, so the imminent peril of invasion began to recede. The enemy had lost his best chance, and the Home Guard had rendered its first and most conspicuous service to the cause of its country.

But those services were far too useful to be discontinued because the immediate peril had passed. A time would shortly come when the regular army would be called upon for more distant and difficult service than that of standing guard over our island coasts. The enemy, foiled in his hope of striking Britain down by a blow at the heart, was already in search of new lines of attack. The Mediterranean, the life-line of the British Commonwealth, was menaced, and it was necessary to despatch large bodies of troops to the Middle East. Moreover, there had to be kept in mind the eternal truth that wars are not won by defence alone, and that, when the opportune moment came, the British Army must and would assume the offensive. It was necessary that the Home Guard should increasingly take over from it the task of defence against invasion, in order to free our striking force for use outside Britain.

This urgent need necessitated a review of the Home Guard's rôle and requirements. Its status and value had been proved beyond all doubt and all criticism. It had established itself as an essential and permanent part of the country's defence system, and, although its special character as an auxiliary part-time force was to remain, it was decided to give its provisional organisation a firmer and more permanent shape without altering its essential local character. In that local character, indeed, that home-bred quality with its great variety of type and capacity, the essential soul of the force was to be found, and it was most important not to impair it. The new organisation was therefore designed primarily to provide an administrative system and larger opportunities for training. The rôle of the force remained as before—the provision of local garrisons for communications, vulnerable

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places and key-points, and the giving of timely notice of the presence or approach of any enemy to the commanders of the regular mobile troops, which could then be despatched rapidly to deal with him. With the diminished probability of invasion in force, itself the necessary result of winter weather with its storms, gales and fogs, it was, however, obviously unnecessary to maintain the high standard of constant vigilance previously called for. The requirements of local defence would now be fully met if the personnel of a section which formerly had constantly manned a locality for defence were merely held in readiness to do so at short notice, and possibly in reduced strength, in case of emergency. Guards, pickets and patrols could be cut down to the minimum and carried out on a shift system, which would allow of shortening the individual's hours of duty. This reduction of duty would allow of more time being devoted to training, to which greater attention was in future to be paid. A simple training manual was officially issued, laying down a syllabus, the bulk of which could be carried out under cover, with week-end exercises in which the majority of Home Guardsmen would normally be free to take part, and authority was given for the local companies to rent the training accommodation required.

There was, however, no intention of systematising the training to excess. Local conditions, the particular duty for which each section was needed, and the resources available were governing factors which had to be taken into account everywhere and allowed full weight. But there are certain principles of Home Guard training which are of general application.

Drills and parades [to quote the statement made by Sir Edward Grigg, Under-Secretary for War, in the House of Commons on November 6] are not as essential to the training of Home Guard units as they are to that of regular troops, though Home Guards, like all other good troops, like turning out occasionally for a church parade or other ceremony and marching for all to admire behind a band. That does good to everyone. Nor is the Home Guard intended to organise or train for mobile action on any but the most limited scale. The highly laudable military zeal of local leaders in

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these directions may at times have outrun its proper rôle. The higher commanders should watch and, where necessary, check such tendencies, in order that the strength and contentment of the force may not be impaired.

Such unofficial initiative, however, as that exemplified by the training school at Osterley Park, associated with the names of Mr. Edward Hulton and Major Tom Wintringham, is to be encouraged, and this particular school, intended primarily for instructors and leaders, has been taken over with its staff by the War Office and re-accommodated in a place where it can carry on its work throughout the winter. Arrangements were also made for compensation to be paid for loss of wages by Home Guard personnel, should they at any time be called out for full-time emergency service under War Office orders.

In addition to this, the higher organisation of the Home Guard was placed for the first time on a permanent basis. Hitherto there had been nothing above the Area Organiser, and there were no recognised ranks for officers or non-commissioned officers throughout the force. The operational command of the Home Guard had from the first been vested in the Commander-in-Chief, Home Forces, who exercised it through the channel of the regular Army Commands throughout the country. But the administrative side of the organisation was at first non-existent. This was now brought into being. At the head of it stood a new Director-General, Major-General T. R. Eastwood, who was to replace the former Inspector General on the staff of the Commander-in-Chief, Home Forces, and was to take over many of his duties, together with some of those exercised by the staff of Major-General Sir John Brown, Director of Army Welfare. A new Inspector General was added, the first appointment to this post being that of General Lord Gort, the former commander of the B.E.F. in France.

Equally important was the question of establishing a hierarchy of command within the individual companies of the force, and the regularisation of the relationship between Home Guard officers and those of the regular army. Prior to this,

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there had in fact been no Home Guard officers or non-commissioned officers as such. Every Home Guardsman held the rank only of full private, and the duties of command were carried out by privates appointed for the purpose, often with strange titles. Such officers had no right to command any but Home Guard troops, so that, despite the fact that many of them were ex-officers of wide experience in the three Services, not only the regular officer but the regular warrant officer and non-commissioned officer ranked above them and could give them orders. It was therefore decided to make fuller use of the first-rate military material existing in the Home Guard by granting King's Commissions to Home Guard commanders, and replacing the fancy titles of Home Guard appointments by those of officers, warrant officers and non-commissioned officers, as in the regular army. An Order-in-Council granted King's Commissions to all approved commanders in the Home Guard, and set up a suitable complement of warrant and non-commissioned ranks bearing the traditional titles of those ranks. By this means Home Guard officers, though their functions would be normally limited to the command of Home Guard troops, can be placed in charge of all troops in any locality, should a specific emergency arise. There was no intention of interfering with the informal but effective discipline prevailing in the Home Guard from the first moment of its inception, which, in Sir Edward Grigg's words, "breathes the spirit of the old trained bands, a democratic and very British spirit which we do not wish to impair in any way". To that end discipline would rest, as in the past, upon the team spirit rather than upon strict legal powers of summary punishment, and there were to be no distinctions of pay and pension between officers and other ranks or alteration of the conditions of service under which the Home Guardsman was enrolled.

Other changes dealt with finance and equipment. The overall capitation grant of £1 a head was abolished, and larger grants were given to the County Associations responsible for the administration of the force, to cover the cost of transport,

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training accommodation, subsistence allowance and other administrative charges. As regards equipment, the Home Guard was already in possession of arms on a far more lavish scale than in the first days of local improvisation, and it was proposed to provide armament for a million men in the shape of rifles, automatic rifles, machine guns and grenades. As regards uniform, the flimsy overalls with which the force had originally been issued were now to be replaced by a battle dress identical with that worn by the regular army as soon as sufficient supplies of this became available. A warm and durable trench cape was served out as a substitute for the army greatcoat, and the supply of steel helmets, which, owing to the demands made by the Civil Defence services and other bodies, had lagged much behind the demand, was to be vigorously expedited.

On these broad lines was based the winter reorganisation of the Home Guard, which converted it from a series of bodies raised in urgency to meet an imminent deadly peril into a permanent and recognised portion of the Armed Forces of the Crown. It had more than served its primary purpose, for never was a force so formidable more quickly or more cheaply raised, and those who, through the length and breadth of the country, gave their energy and ability without stint to its organisation, had rendered a service of inestimable value. The first appeal for Local Defence Volunteers released a flood of patriotic zeal and enthusiasm for arms which raised the force in a few weeks to a number three times as large as that which was originally hoped for and aimed at, and the latest reorganisation shows that the high value of the services of the patriotic men who, from end to end of Britain, gave so much of their time, pains and private resources to the manifold needs of the Home Guard, has been fully and gratefully recognised.

NEW PROPOSALS FOR INDIAN SETTLEMENT

I. THE STATEMENT OF AUGUST 8

THE Indian constitutional controversy has reached a new stage. On August 8 a statement of policy was made by the Secretary of State, Mr. Amery, and by the Governor-General, Lord Linlithgow.* It declared that it was the Government's intention to expand the Governor-General's Executive Council and to create a War Advisory Council, and it submitted new proposals for the treatment of the constitutional problem during and after the war. The Viceroy had previously seen Mr. Gandhi, the unofficial leader of the Indian National Congress, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, President of the Moslem League, and other political leaders, and the statement is generally believed to have made public the essentials of what took place at these private discussions. It clearly indicated that an effort was being made to give finality to the controversy for the duration of the war, without prejudice to the political claims of the various parties, whose collaboration is necessary for devising the new constitution which will establish India as a Dominion within the orbit of the British Commonwealth.

The statement said that, although the political differences which have hitherto prevented a political settlement being reached remained unbridged, the British Government did not feel justified in postponing longer its decision to expand the Governor-General's Executive Council in a manner that would more closely associate Indian public opinion with the conduct of the war. Authority was also given to establish a War Advisory Council, which would contain representatives of the Indian States and of other interests in the national life of India

* The text is given in *THE ROUND TABLE*, No. 120, September 1940, p. 861.

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as a whole. As to British intentions in the constitutional field, the statement first dealt with the position of the minorities, contending that it went without saying that the British Government could not contemplate the complete transfer of its present responsibilities in India to any kind of government whose authority was directly denied by large and powerful elements in the country; nor could the Government be party to the coercion of such elements into submission to such a government. Secondly, the statement described the nature of the machinery that would be used to devise a new constitutional scheme for India. It referred to the claim, strongly urged by Indian nationalists, that the framing of the constitution should be "primarily the responsibility of Indians themselves, and should originate from Indian conceptions of the social, economic and political structure of Indian life". "His Majesty's Government", the statement continued, "are in sympathy with that desire and wish to see it given the fullest practical expression, subject to the due fulfilment of the obligations which Great Britain's long connection with India has imposed on her and for which His Majesty's Government cannot divest themselves of responsibility."

It was made clear that the period of the war was not the time for dealing with those fundamental constitutional issues which have been the subject of controversy for years. But the Viceroy was authorised to declare that the British Government will readily assent to setting up, as soon as possible after the war, a body representative of the principal elements of Indian national life to devise the framework of the new constitution. In hastening decisions on all relevant matters, the fullest assistance of the British Government was promised. In the meantime the British authorities undertook to promote in every way possible those practical measures which may be taken by Indians themselves to reach a basis of friendly agreement, first, on the form which the post-war representative body should take, and, secondly, upon the principles and outlines of the constitution itself. For the war, it was decided to reconstitute the Central Government by including political representatives

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on the Viceroy's Executive Council and by forming the War Advisory Council. It was hoped that the collaboration of political parties in these bodies would encourage new bonds of union and understanding that would help towards the attainment by India of that free and equal partnership in the British Commonwealth which remains the proclaimed and accepted goal of the Imperial Crown and the British Parliament.

II. THE POLITICAL BACKGROUND

THE political background against which the statement appeared had undergone some changes since the Viceroy had previously spoken in October 1939. At that time he declared that the goal for India was Dominion Status, but the Congress attitude as expressed at Patna indicated that "Indian freedom cannot exist within the orbit of British imperialism", which frankly meant that Dominion Status did not meet the Congress case. It was asserted that the people of India alone could properly shape their own constitution, through the medium of a constituent assembly, and determine their relations with other countries. This policy contributed largely to the attitude adopted by minority elements, particularly the Moslem League, which, while anxious enough for independence, were not at all willing to accept proposals which implied that independence should be based on the democratic principle of majority rule. The Congress leaders, although continuing to insist upon a solution that met their own demands, were nevertheless forced by the facts of political conditions to recognise the claims of others. The party has never formally abandoned its demand for a constituent assembly, but its policy in this direction has been modified. The admission has been made that the minority elements must find satisfaction under any constitution that may be devised by Indians, with the perfectly reasonable proviso that no minority should be invested with the power to veto all constitutional advance.

Meanwhile the trend of events in Europe made a great change in Indian political opinion. The invasion of Holland

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and Belgium and the collapse of France seriously perturbed all thinking Indians. The intervention of Italy, with its effects upon the situation in the Middle East, brought the war more closely to Indian shores, and Indians began to consider more seriously than they had before what a Nazi and Fascist victory would mean to their political ideals. From the first, Indian opinion about the war has been strongly anti-Nazi, but the spread of the war to the Mediterranean saw the emergence of powerful pro-Ally tendencies which had, to a large extent, been obscured by the political grievances felt by nationalists towards Great Britain. The first reaction to the situation in Europe was a strong demand that India should play a more vital part in supporting the war effort, and newspapers of all political persuasions began to urge more drastic policies for winning the war. To some extent the domestic controversy was overshadowed, and appeals for its abandonment were accompanied by pleas for the formation of Coalition Governments in the Provinces and for the reconstruction of the Central Administration. These proposals were primarily made with a view to intensifying the Indian war effort, and the authorities were criticised for what was described as the inadequacy of their plans for expanding the army and for their failure to appreciate the industrial possibilities of the country for equipping modern forces of war.

This new mood had its effect on political policies. Broadly speaking, the Congress had been unwilling to associate itself with the British war effort until the party's political demand for independence had been met. But in the light of world affairs the Congress Working Committee re-examined the general situation, and a policy was adopted which modified the previous attitude of the party. The committee reiterated its view that British acknowledgment of Indian independence was the only solution for the constitutional problem, but it also urged the immediate formation of a provisional National Government which would command the confidence of all elected elements in the Central Legislature. The committee held that, unless a declaration of independence were made and

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a National Government formed, all efforts at organizing the moral and material resources of the country for defence would be ineffective, and the assertion was made that, if the measures proposed by the Working Committee were adopted, the Congress would be able to throw its full weight into efforts for the effective organization of the country's defences.

The committee's decision to assist in marshalling Indian support for the war brought its leaders into conflict with Mr. Gandhi, whose faith in non-violence prevents him from offering other than moral support to the British cause. Like his colleagues, Mr. Gandhi condemns Nazism, but, unlike them, he does not approve of meeting violence with violence, even when applied to Hitlerism. He has repeatedly appealed to the British people to adopt non-violence in fighting Hitler, claiming that such a method of warfare would disarm and humiliate the forces of evil. Few, even among his own followers, can follow the Mahatma into this sphere of reasoning; and when the committee passed its resolution offering material support to Britain Mr. Gandhi found himself outnumbered and overruled. Thus the unofficial leadership of the party was temporarily transferred from Mr. Gandhi to Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar, the former Premier of Madras, who was credited with the responsibility for preparing the committee's resolution. In absolving Mr. Gandhi from future responsibility for party policy the committee left him free to pursue his ideal of non-violence in his own way, merely disagreeing with him in his proposal to apply his principles to the defence of the country. In effect, the committee came to the conclusion that the problem of achieving national freedom had, in the light of world events, to be considered with the allied problem of maintaining freedom and defending it from external aggression and internal disorder. As applied to the war this marked an advance on former Congress policy, although the demand for independence remained intact. Moreover, the proposal to create a National Government based on the elected elements in the Legislature tended to open up a new field of controversy, as it was taken to mean that Congress sought in war-time alterations in the

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constitutional structure which go to the very roots of the constitutional controversy, although Congress leaders implied that no such intention underlay their proposal.

III. THE CONGRESS REPLY

THE statement of August 8 was regarded in moderate circles as marking an advance on previous declarations, particularly in indicating that Indians themselves would be primarily responsible for the shaping of their new constitution. Moslems and other minorities expressed their satisfaction that their special claims were to receive due weight. Nationalists, on the other hand, denied that the statement had done anything to ease the political situation and insisted that the deadlock would continue until the Congress case had been met. The old accusation was repeated that the British authorities were exploiting communal and other differences in their own interests, and it was contended that the assurances given to the minorities were likely to nullify all legitimate national aspirations.

These views were given explicit form by the Congress Working Committee in a resolution which said that the statement showed an unwillingness on the part of the British Government to relinquish power. It maintained that British policy denied India her natural right to complete national freedom. It denied the British Government's claim to have a determining say in framing the new constitution. It declared once more that India cannot function within the orbit of an imperial power and must attain the status of a free and independent nation, though it was admitted that such a status did not prevent close association with other countries in a comity of free nations. The resolution disagreed with the British conclusion that the creation of a provisional National Government would raise the unsolved constitutional issue or prejudge it in favour of the majority community, and it deplored the proposal to expand the Viceroy's Executive Council in the manner proposed which, to the committee, meant that the British Government was prepared to "gather together and carry on with such dissentient groups and

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individuals as oppose the wishes of the majority of the people of India". The conclusion reached was that British policy in India was opposed to the principle of democracy as acclaimed by the British Government in their war aims and ran counter to the best interests of India. In these circumstances the Working Committee called upon its followers to condemn the attitude of the British Government by means of public meetings and otherwise and through their elected representatives in the Provincial Legislatures.

The Working Committee objected particularly to the proposal that the British Government should conduct the administration in collaboration with those willing to co-operate. This was interpreted as meaning that an autocratic and irresponsible system of government would continue so long as any group of people or the Princes, as distinct from their peoples, raised any objection to a constitution framed by elected representatives—a policy that was held to be a direct incitement to civil discord and fatal to compromise. It was emphasized that Congress had never thought in terms of coercing the minorities, as had been suggested, and that the party's demand for a constituent assembly had been misinterpreted as coercion and had been made into an insuperable barrier to constitutional progress. The committee reiterated the Congress view that British policy aimed at creating, maintaining and aggravating the differences of Indian national life.

IV. ATTITUDE OF THE MINORITIES

THE unwillingness of the Congress party to co-operate on the basis of the statement of August 8 found no counterpart in the attitude of other political groups, though they criticised the statement in accordance with their respective policies. The Working Committee of the Moslem League came to the conclusion that the statement afforded satisfaction to the Moslems as having, on the whole, met the League's demand for a clear assurance that no constitution will be adopted without its consent and approval. The League was also satisfied with

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the proposal to expand the Executive Council, although information was sought regarding its composition, the parties to be represented on it, and the portfolios that were to be assigned to popular representatives. It became clear that the League leaders were anxious to maintain the status the party has established during the past year. Their attitude to the British proposals implied that the League will not readily abandon its position *vis-à-vis* the Congress party, and is not prepared at this stage to drop its proposals for establishing separate Hindu and Moslem nations, although several prominent leaders are not agreeable to the partition of the country and are unwilling to go so far as Mr. M. A. Jinnah, the League President, would like to take them. But, in the main, the Moslem League showed an inclination to collaborate for the duration of the war.

The Hindu Mahasabha had its own views on the British proposals, but it urged co-operation both on the Executive Council and on the War Advisory Council. Representatives of the Scheduled Castes also agreed to co-operate. The National Liberal Federation asked that British intentions should be made clearer, and maintained that an assurance was required that British obligations to India would not stand in the way of the country attaining the declared goal of equal partnership, and that that goal should be attained within a specified time. They also considered that the guarantees given to the minorities were worded in such wide terms that they might be used to stop all political progress, and they urged the Government to implement the promise of Dominion Status if minority opposition were so intransigent as to make all advance impossible. It was also felt that the Defence portfolio should pass to Indian hands, and that the defence forces should be organised on a wider national basis than now obtained. In agreeing that the new members of the Executive Council should represent the political parties, the Liberals urged that such members should be in a majority and that Cabinet methods should be introduced with the Viceroy as constitutional head. Under this arrangement the Liberals held that the British Government should not

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ordinarily interfere with any policy supported by the Executive Council and the Central Legislature.

The Jamsaheb of Nawanagar, Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, issued a statement in which he said that the British Government and the Viceroy were to be congratulated on their declarations. In welcoming the decision to include representatives of the States on the War Advisory Council, the Jamsaheb made a plea for collaboration, asserting that India can ill afford at this juncture in world affairs to postpone, even for a single day, her united and solid war contribution, and "to fritter away her energies in other channels when the law of the jungle threatens the basic foundations of civilisation and the ordered progress of humanity". He maintained that the joint association of parties in the inner councils of government should help to evolve that tradition of confidence and fair play between the communities which alone can provide a basis for a sound constitution. By creating a War Advisory Council and expanding the Viceroy's Executive Council to include popular representatives, the Jamsaheb saw opportunities for framing the future constitution by agreement, intensifying the war effort, and developing defence arrangements, all of which were within the grasp of Indians under the terms of the statement of August 8.

V. SEEKING A SOLUTION

THE attitude of the Congress Working Committee deeply disappointed those who believed that a provisional solution was possible within the terms of the new statement. It was felt by many, especially by those who have closely studied constitution-making, that many of the difficulties inherent in the controversy would have been modified if the Congress leaders had agreed to co-operate. Some commentators even argued that the Congress case for a constituent assembly had been partly met by the British Government's acceptance of the principle that the future constitution should originate from Indian conceptions. It was clear, however, that an expanded Executive Council did not meet the immediate Congress

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demand for a provisional National Government. It was apparently assumed in Congress circles that in function and procedure the enlarged Council would operate as at present; little thought seems to have been given to the fact that, as representatives of important political parties, the new councillors would be in a strong position to influence policy, quite apart from the advantage to national unity of collaboration between party leaders whose present political policies are mutually contradictory. Nor was it very clear why the Congress leaders should deny the British Government at any rate some say in framing the new constitution, particularly as such subjects as defence and external affairs call for readjustments between the two countries. Indeed, far-sighted interpreters of the statement did not hesitate to say that within its terms nearly all that the Nationalists sought could be obtained, some going so far as to imply that those matters on which Great Britain still retained the right to have a say were the very matters which must in due course become subjects for treaty agreement, when India can produce a national entity with which such agreement may be reached.

Meetings of the Congress Working Committee and the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay about the middle of September clearly indicated that the Congress leaders were in a quandary. Mr. Gandhi indicated that mass civil disobedience was out of the question, though individual disobedience might be a possibility. Behind the political demands of the party lay a sincere realisation of what is at stake in Europe and an obvious unwillingness to embarrass the British Government at a time when the British Commonwealth is seeking to uphold liberty and justice for the world as a whole. At the same time, for Congress to refuse to co-operate and yet do nothing to secure its political demands implies, as Mr. Gandhi hinted, its possible extinction as a political party. Assuming that all other important political bodies were represented in the Central Administration, the influence of Congress in the country would undergo a severe test; for the country as a whole is emphatic in its condemnation of Nazism, and political efforts

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designed to hinder the British war effort would be distasteful to the majority of Indians, including the majority of Congress men.

The inability of the Government to meet the Congress case as outlined under the temporary leadership of Mr. Rajagopalachariar has resulted in the party once more placing the leadership in Mr. Gandhi's hands and again reverting to his policy of non-violence in all fields. At the time of writing there are indications that Mr. Gandhi will continue to search for a solution. Although British spokesmen have said that the statement of August 8 must be regarded as the considered British policy at this stage, it is felt by some political observers that the possibilities of a settlement are not ruled out by that fact. But a settlement implies some compromise on the part of Congress leaders. The Congress claim that British regard for the minorities is encouraging civil disaffection overlooks the fact that civil discord will almost certainly follow if the Congress demands are met in full. Hence the belief of experienced observers that the terms of the statement offer scope for a wartime provisional settlement, in that it aims at securing collaboration at the Centre for the prosecution of the war and should tend to encourage more unified policies among parties with conflicting claims.

India,
September 1940.

POSTSCRIPT

On September 27 Mr. Gandhi had another interview with the Viceroy, and on the 30th the letters subsequently exchanged between them were published.

The Viceroy to Mr. Gandhi

As you remember, you wrote to me on September 18 to ask that I should grant you an interview, and you explained in your letter that you were anxious to discuss the situation covered by the recent resolution of the All-India Congress Committee, not only in your capacity as guide to Congress but as a personal friend. I was, I need not say, most ready to talk things over with you and we have now

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had the advantage of two conversations. In the course of these conversations the situation has been exhaustively discussed, with particular reference to the question of free speech in time of war.

In that letter, while professing yourself most anxious to avoid in any way embarrassing his Majesty's Government in the prosecution of the war, you made it clear that you regarded it as essential that the Indian National Congress and other members of the public should be in a position to give full expression to their views in relation to the war effort, provided only that such expression was fully non-violent.

I indicated to you the nature of the special treatment laid down by law in the United Kingdom for dealing with conscientious objectors—which I am broadly describing as an arrangement under which a conscientious objector is absolved from the duty of fighting and allowed even to profess his faith publicly. He is not permitted to carry opposition to the length of endeavouring to persuade others, whether soldiers or munition workers, to abandon their allegiance or discontinue their effort.

You made it clear to me that you would not regard treatment of that nature as adequate in the conditions of India and you regarded it as essential that in India, where in your judgment conditions are wholly different from those existing in Britain, the Indian conscientious objector either to all war as such or to the participation of India in the present war should be untrammelled in the expression of his views.

It emerged further from our conversation that while you would not yourself preach to workers engaged in war work at the actual works in an endeavour there to dissuade them from working on war equipment, you should regard it as essential that it should be open to Congressmen and non-Congressmen alike to refrain from assisting India's war effort in any way which would involve India's participation in bloodshed.

I listened with the utmost care and attention to your argument, and our examination of the situation has been full and close. I felt bound, however, in the outcome, to make it clear to you that such action as you suggest will certainly amount not only to the inhibition of India's war effort but to that embarrassment of Great Britain in her prosecution of the war which Congress state they are anxious to avoid, and that it would clearly not be possible in the interests of India herself, nor particularly at this most critical juncture in the war, to acquiesce in interference with the war effort which would be involved in freedom of speech so wide as that for which you had asked.

POSTSCRIPT

Mr. Gandhi to the Viceroy

I have your letter of even date. It fully sets forth the Congress position as I placed it before you. It is a matter of deep regret to me that the Government has not been able to appreciate the Congress position, which is meant just to satisfy the bare requirements of the people, either Congress men or others who felt a conscientious objection towards helping a war to which they were never invited and which they regard, as far as they are concerned, as one for saving the imperialism of which India is the greatest victim. Their objection is just as conscientious as mine was as a war resister. I cannot claim greater freedom for my conscience than for that of those I have named. As I made it plain in the course of my talks, Congress is as much opposed to victory for Nazism as any Britisher can be.

But their objection cannot be carried to the extent of their participation in the war, and since you and the Secretary of State for India declared that the whole of India was voluntarily helping in the war effort it becomes necessary to make clear that the vast majority of the people of India are not interested in it. They make no distinction between Nazism and the double autocracy that rules India. Had his Majesty's Government recognised that freedom was required in the special condition of India they would have justified the claim that they were receiving from India only such effort as they could voluntarily make. The war party and the "no war" party would have been placed on an equal footing in so far as each worked in a fully non-violent way.

As to the last paragraph of your letter, I wish to remind you it was never contemplated to carry non-embarrassment to the point of self-extinction, or in other words, stopping all national activities which are designed to make India peace-minded and to show that India's participation could not benefit anyone, not excluding Britain. Indeed, I hold that if India were free to make her voice heard, which freedom of speech implies, India would probably have turned the scales in favour of Britain and true liberty, by the moral prestige which Britain would then have gained. I must therefore repeat that Congress does still want to refrain from embarrassing the British Government in their war effort, but it is impossible for Congress to make of this policy a fetish by denying its creed in this critical period in the history of mankind. If Congress had to die it should do so in the act of proclaiming its faith.

A few days later, Sir Sikander Hyat Khan, Prime Minister of the Punjab, declared that "Mr. Gandhi's demand amounted

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to this—that while Britain is engaged in a life and death struggle against Hitlerism, he should be given freedom to stab her in the back."

Mr. Gandhi also announced that a pacifist campaign would be begun by selected individuals. Mr. Vinoba Bhave, a member of Mr. Gandhi's seminary, having made four pacifist speeches, was arrested and sentenced to three months' imprisonment on October 21. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was arrested on October 31, and sentenced to four years' rigorous imprisonment on November 5. Arrests of other Congress leaders followed.

On November 20, at a joint sitting of the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly at Delhi, the Viceroy made the following announcement:

On August 8 I published a statement on behalf of his Majesty's Government. That statement reaffirmed the attainment by India of free and equal partnership in the British Commonwealth as the proclaimed and accepted goal of the Imperial Crown and of the British Parliament. In order to remove all doubt as to the intentions of his Majesty's Government as to the method and time of the progress towards that goal it declared the sympathy of his Majesty's Government with the desire that the responsibility for framing the future constitutional scheme of Indian self-government should, subject to the due fulfilment of the obligations which Great Britain's long connexion with India has imposed on her, be primarily the responsibility of Indians themselves, and should originate from Indian conceptions of the social, economic, and political structure of Indian life.

It at the same time emphasized the concern of his Majesty's Government that full weight should be given to the views of minorities in the framing of that scheme, and made it clear that his Majesty's Government could not contemplate the transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of government whose authority was directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life. The method by which these two indispensably linked objects were to be secured was the setting up on the basis of friendly agreement of a body representative of all the principal elements of India's national life to devise the framework of the new Constitution.

This body was to be set up immediately after the war, but his

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Majesty's Government expressed their desire to welcome and promote in the meantime every sincere and practical step taken by Indians themselves that could prepare the way for agreement upon its form and procedure as well as upon the principles and outlines of the Constitution itself.

Meanwhile, in order to associate Indian public opinion more closely with the government of India at the Centre, and in the hope of promoting the unity of India by the creation of new bonds of understanding through practical and responsible cooperation in the task of governing India and directing the Indian war effort, I was authorized to invite Indian political leaders to join my Executive Council, as well as to establish a War Advisory Council containing representatives of the Indian States and of other interests in the national life of India as a whole.

Outside India these proposals, both in their immediate and in their larger ultimate aspects, have been welcomed as liberal in conception and as representing the best practical solution of existing differences. In India itself, too, they have met with the support of a large body of opinion. In their more immediate aspect, however—namely, the expansion of my Executive Council—I have not secured the response that was hoped from political leaders in India. The reasons for which they have been unable to accept the proposals of his Majesty's Government are conflicting and, indeed, in some ways mutually destructive. However that may be, the effect is that the major political parties concerned are not, in present circumstances, prepared to take advantage of the opportunity offered them.

His Majesty's Government note this conclusion with sincere regret. The proposals in question would place real power and real responsibility in Indian hands. Their acceptance would afford the most hopeful contribution which Indian political leaders could make at this critical time towards the preservation of Indian unity and towards an agreed constitutional settlement for the future. His Majesty's Government do not propose to withdraw them, and are still prepared to give effect to them as soon as they are convinced that a sufficient degree of representative support is forthcoming.

But as that degree of support has evidently not yet manifested itself, his Majesty's Government have decided that I should not be justified in proceeding with the expansion of my Executive Council or the establishment of the War Advisory Council at the present moment.

IRELAND IN THE VORTEX

I. EXTERNAL PRESSURE

THE cyclone of barbaric destruction, sweeping westwards across Europe, has at last reached Ireland. On the afternoon of August 26 a German bomber aeroplane dropped several bombs on the co-operative creamery at Campile, County Wexford, and other places in the vicinity, killing three girl employees and wrecking a portion of the premises. Campile is situated on the railway line between Waterford and Rosslare in the immediate neighbourhood of an important bridge. From the air the creamery buildings look like a small factory. Identification of the plane and the bomb fragments by experts placed its identity beyond question, and the Irish Government promptly protested to the German Foreign Office and demanded full reparation for what they described as a "tragic occurrence". It was not, however, until October 9 that it was officially announced in Dublin that the German Government had accepted the evidence offered by the Irish Government that it was a German aircraft which dropped the bombs at Campile, "although the inquiries made by the German authorities provided no ground for believing" that this was so. On this basis the German Government expressed regret for the occurrence and agreed to pay compensation for the loss and damage sustained. Whether this characteristic outrage was accidental or, as some people believe, carried out "accidentally on purpose", it has finally dispelled the childish belief that our neutrality can preserve us from the effects of the storm now raging around our shores. It has also brought home to many Irish people the real nature of the struggle and of the issues involved. Nor is this the only evidence of German aerial activity over Ireland. Six days before, on August 20, another German bomber, which had somehow lost its tail, crashed in the mountains adjoining the Atlantic at Cloghane,

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County Kerry. Its crew of six, two of whom were seriously injured, were interned. On September 29 a British fighter aeroplane made a forced landing near Enniscorthy, County Wexford. It had attacked no one in Ireland. Its pilot was also interned. On the night of October 25 an "unidentified" aeroplane dropped high explosive and incendiary bombs near Rathdrum in County Wicklow. Fortunately the bombs fell in open country and no serious damage was done. On August 30 the Irish Government announced that the German Foreign Office had admitted that the attack on the S.S. *Kerry Head* off Kinsale, County Cork, on August 1 was also made by German aircraft and expressed regret at the occurrence.* Further proof of this regret was given on October 22 when a German aeroplane sank the *Kerry Head* off the Cork coast with the loss of all hands. Other attacks have also been made on Irish shipping. On both August 20 and 21 the Great Western Railway mail steamer *St. Patrick* was bombed and machine-gunned by German planes whilst on its normal route between Rosslare and Fishguard. On the first occasion two of the crew were wounded by bullets and one, an Irish citizen, subsequently died. The ship itself fortunately escaped. A few days previously the collier *Rosemarie* was also attacked by several German planes off the Irish coast and one of the crew was wounded. About the same time two other ships, one off our west coast and the other in the Irish Sea, both bound for Irish ports, were bombed and machine-gunned by German planes and one Irish sailor was killed. Similar treatment was meted out shortly afterwards to the *Loch Ryan*, an Irish owned sailing-vessel, but the ship, although twice hit by bombs, succeeded in reaching port. On September 4 the Irish steamer *Luimneach* was sunk in the Atlantic by gunfire from a German submarine although displaying the usual marks of nationality. Many casualties amongst the Irish in Great Britain and the arrival of Irish women and children refugees at our ports have made us realise the nature of the attack on Britain. The Irish Government has seen fit to warn Irish citizens

* See *THE ROUND TABLE*, No. 120, September 1940, p. 867.

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against leaving the country "except on business of vital importance".

On October 22 Lord Cranborne, the Dominions Secretary, stated in the House of Commons that in response to a suggestion from the Irish Government, which was greatly appreciated, discussions were taking place with a view to facilitating the reception in Ireland of mothers and children from evacuation areas in Great Britain who were able to make arrangements for permanent accommodation for themselves and their children.

German interference of another kind was disclosed by the Irish Government's announcement on August 17 that three men answering to the strange names of Henry Obed, Herbert Tribuk, and Dieter Cartner had been sentenced to seven years' penal servitude by the Special Criminal Court, the proceedings being held *in camera* as is now permissible. The announcement stated that these men had landed near Skibbereen, County Cork, on July 7 and had subsequently been arrested with eight incendiary bombs, four tins of explosive and £850 in Bank of England notes in their possession. Their mission was obvious and their prompt arrest fortunate. It is understood that other visitors of a similar kind have since landed in Kerry and are still at large.

These German excursions to Ireland have coincided with renewed activity on the part of the I.R.A., whose terrorist manifestations have at last, however, been dealt with firmly by the Irish Government. On July 19 detectives arrested five men at Swords, County Dublin, who were in charge of a lorry containing several tons of ammunition believed to have been a portion of that stolen from the Magazine Fort, Phoenix Park, on December 23, 1939.* On July 29 one Michael Conway, who was sentenced to death by the Military Tribunal in 1936 for the murder of John Egan at Dungarvan but who was subsequently reprieved and released by the present Government, was sentenced to two years' imprisonment by the Special Criminal Court on various counts involving the possession of

* See *THE ROUND TABLE*, No. 118, March 1940, p. 390.

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ammunition and incriminating documents. On this occasion he is not so likely to be released. During August, September and October several other members or supporters of the I.R.A. were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment on like charges. In the course of these proceedings it was disclosed that considerable amounts of arms and ammunition had been found. On August 3 a party of men were surprised by armed detectives whilst endeavouring to dig a tunnel from the grounds of an adjacent convent under the walls of the Cork Jail in which several hundred political suspects are interned. During the subsequent mêlée one of these men was shot dead by the detectives and another seriously wounded. Acting under its special emergency powers the Government, apparently because of attempted intimidation of the jury, ordered the coroner holding the inquest on the dead man to discharge the jury and find a verdict confined to the cause of death. These clashes between the police and the forces of disorder reached a climax on August 16, when a veritable battle took place at Rathgar Road, Dublin, between gunmen and detectives in which one detective was killed and two others seriously wounded. The trouble started when the detectives attempted to enter a small grocery store which was apparently an important I.R.A. head-quarters. As they approached these premises they were met by a fusillade from a Thompson gun, fired without any warning through a partition, which caused the casualties mentioned amongst the detectives. Several men, who then rushed from the shop, were followed by the uninjured detectives and a gun battle took place on the public road during which one of the fugitives fell wounded and another was taken prisoner. In the shop itself were found a number of revolvers, ammunition and a duplicating machine. One of the arrested men was in possession of a loaded .45 Webley revolver, and a Thompson gun was found by the police near the premises. On the same day the Government made an order under the Emergency Powers Acts setting up a new Military Court for the trial of serious offences against the State or its officers with power to impose only one penalty,

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namely death by shooting. This court was immediately constituted, and the two men arrested, Thomas Green *alias* Francis Hart, and Patrick McGrath, were tried at once for the murder of detective officer Hyland. Four days after the crime, on August 20, they were duly sentenced to death and, after unsuccessful habeas corpus proceedings which were carried to the Supreme Court, they were executed on September 6. These proceedings not only added a new chapter to our legal history but, what is more important, gave practical evidence of the Government's determination to govern with firmness. Had any other course been adopted the very foundations of justice and government would undoubtedly have been seriously shaken. A younger man named Thomas Hunt was subsequently charged before the same court with complicity in the murder of Detective Hyland and, after conviction, was also sentenced to death. But, perhaps because of his youth and the circumstantial nature of the evidence against him, the Government commuted his sentence to penal servitude for life. It is interesting to note that two of the three men convicted of this murder were deportees from England, whilst the third had secured release from imprisonment here by going on hunger strike. It is understood that on this, as on former occasions, strong private pressure was exercised by influential busybodies to induce the Government not to carry out the death sentence on Green and McGrath, but fortunately this proved unavailing.

It would be quite wrong to infer from these events that there is much pro-German feeling in the country. The so-called I.R.A. is really both a discredited and ineffectual force and, always provided the Government maintains its present firm attitude, the overwhelming majority of the people will remain united behind it in support of the policy of neutrality. The only thing which could disrupt this unity would be an attempt by the British Government to interfere with our neutrality; a German attack would be firmly resisted by a virtually united people. In this connection it is well to remember that we are in a better position than other neutral

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countries that have succumbed to the Nazi attack. There the German forces had only land frontiers or a narrow strip of sea to cross, but to reach Ireland they would have to cross several hundred miles of ocean closely patrolled by the British Navy and flying-boats. Anything save an air invasion would therefore seem improbable, and our small, but efficient and highly mobile, army would certainly make it hot for any such invaders. This force is well disciplined and loyal, and its ranks have recently been swelled by many recruits from the best type of our young men. Moreover, it is now supported by the armed section of the local security force, a body similar to the British Home Guard, which is to be brought under military command in the event of hostilities. This body, which has only just been recruited, is of course neither as experienced nor as disciplined as the Regular Army and in some places there have been indications that politics rather than patriotism inspired the election of its leaders. A sort of naval volunteer force of people with nautical experience has also been formed to assist in the task of coast defence. The army and the military section of the security force must together now number close on 200,000 men, of whom probably 50,000 are fully trained and properly armed. The only real domestic danger which the Government has to fear at the hands of the I.R.A. is assassination, abduction or sabotage, and to meet this threat a special order was made on July 18 providing for the legal discharge of the Government's functions in the event of a situation arising in which any of the Ministers were unable to function. An order has also been made prohibiting unauthorised persons from having in their possession uniforms of the Army or Civic Guard under pain of heavy punishment. Meanwhile the all party Defence Council continues to meet frequently.* Although it has no legal powers, there is every reason to believe that it has fulfilled the useful purpose of bringing together leaders of widely divergent political views who are solely concerned with providing for the adequate defence of the country.

* See *THE ROUND TABLE*, No. 120, September 1940, p. 869.

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The threat of invasion has in fact done great good, for it has brought into contact throughout the country thousands of men who under normal conditions would be unlikely to meet and who would certainly never unite. Men who fought on opposite sides in the Civil War are now drilling and working together in the Army, and British veterans of 1914 are serving in the local security force side by side with men who fought against the British in the Anglo-Irish struggle of 1919-21. The important fact, so far as Ireland is concerned, is that all these men are now serving under one flag and have taken an oath of allegiance to the lawfully constituted Government of their country. No patriotic Irishman, whatever his sympathies in the present world struggle, can fail to rejoice at this result. The direct association of the unarmed section of the security force with the police is also teaching the people that in being loyal to authority they are also loyal to themselves. An interesting proof of this fact is to be found in the astonishing success of a play by Mr. George Shiels, an Antrim man and one of our principal dramatists, which has for its theme the reluctance of our people to assist the police in the detection of crime, a sad inheritance from the days of alien rule. The play describes the struggle of a decent farmer's family to assist the police in securing the conviction of a disreputable criminal. In the end the jury fails to convict and the family's future is in jeopardy. The disillusionment of modern Ireland is revealed by the remark of one character who says, "We thought we were so big and we find we are so little". But the weak spot in our defence position is, as Mr. De Valera has publicly admitted, lack of arms and ammunition. We have, however, sufficient of both to hold an invader until help arrives.

There remains, of course, the strategic and political difficulty caused by the division of the country into two political units, only one of which is engaged in the war. Unfortunately the Catholic Nationalist minority in the Belfast enclave are for the most part, because of their real and imaginary wrongs, largely anti-British in sentiment and constitute one of the principal breeding-grounds for terrorists. Further proof of this was

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given on September 20 when two banks and five post offices in Belfast were simultaneously raided by armed men who stole £2,165. During the raids a post mistress, a police sergeant and a person who resisted arrest were wounded. Bad feeling between the majority and the minority in the North was undoubtedly aggravated by the action of the Northern Government in placing over two hundred political internees on a ship in Strangford Lough. It was felt that this form of detention singled them out for enemy attack by aeroplane or submarine and that it was intended as a gratuitous provocation. As a result of public and private protests this stupid procedure was subsequently terminated. Moving a vote of censure in the Northern Parliament on September 25, Mr. E. Warnock, K.C., a former Minister, said that the Government was composed of tired and jaded men. Its members were, he said, tenants for life and could only be removed by death, illness or promotion; they were never removed for incapacity or failure. Although Lord Craigavon replied with one of his usual "no surrender" speeches and the motion was defeated by 28 votes to 4, the mere fact that it was proposed indicates that all is not well in the Northern majority camp. Any move to replace the existing Northern Government must, however, if it is to be successful, be based on a new and more liberal policy as well as on new men, for the catch cries of 1912 are now as dead as most of their authors. Mr. Warnock's speech showed no indication that he realises this fact. Attention has been directed to another aspect of Northern affairs by a report from the Y.M.C.A. which alleges that there is discrimination against Catholics in the matter of employment, a charge which is in many cases unfortunately true. Possibility of more serious friction has also arisen through the fact that home defence in Northern Ireland has been entrusted by the Government to the notorious "B Special" Constabulary. This political and sectarian body, which is largely recruited from the Orange Lodges and attached to the Royal Ulster Constabulary, has been recently doubled in number and rechristened the Ulster Defence Force. As a

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result of this move a condition of "stabilised tension" exists on the Border. On at least one occasion it has nearly had grave results.

The whole question of the allocation of responsibility between the London and Belfast Governments is complicated and anomalous. Defence, under the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, is a reserved power of the Westminster Parliament, but home security is a transferred power controlled directly by the Belfast Government. The "B Specials", since they are attached to the Ulster Constabulary, remain under Belfast control although their duties are clearly those of a military rather than a police force. This situation is, of course, fraught with danger and has caused serious comment. On September 28 General Sir Hubert Gough disclosed, in a letter to *The Times*, that a memorial signed by several prominent Irish Protestants and ex-service men, including many from Northern Ireland, had been presented to Mr. Churchill, the British Prime Minister, requesting that this camouflaged Ulster Defence Force should be brought under the control of the British War Office. In his letter Sir Hubert demanded an immediate re-examination of Anglo-Irish relations in the light of the obvious trend towards Anglo-American collaboration in world affairs. He pointed out that certain features in British policy regarding Ireland continued to arouse informed criticism both here and in America with unfortunate results. These features, he added, were the legacy of a party policy by which the present National Government in Great Britain was certainly not bound. The way, he urged, was therefore open for a reconsideration of values in view of the international situation. Speaking in Belfast on October 5 Mr. J. M. Andrews, Minister of Finance in the Northern Government, referred to Sir Hubert's letter and protested that the Northern Government, in accordance with Lord Craigavon's recent offer,* was ready to co-operate with Mr. De Valera if his Government renounced its neutrality and undertook not to raise any constitutional issue. Both Lord Craigavon and Mr. Andrews

* See *THE ROUND TABLE*, No. 120, September 1940, p. 872.

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should have known quite well that no intelligent Irishman, remembering the treatment meted out to John Redmond under similar circumstances in 1914-16, is likely even to consider such a proposal, which is specious in appearance but quite devoid of political value or sincerity. Neutrality is, moreover, at the moment, whether one likes it or not, the genuine expression of the will of the majority of the people of Ireland and as such must be accepted unless our protestations in favour of democracy are false. To abandon it would lead inevitably to internal disruption and a consequent weakening of the country's power of resistance to attack. As Mr. Donald Taylor, an English business-man who resides in Belfast and has travelled all over Ireland for many years, recently pointed out in a remarkable letter to the *Manchester Guardian*, ignorance of Ireland as a whole is characteristic of the Belfast business-man who judges the South by the Catholics in his midst. Hence his unyielding determination not to unite with Dublin. Remove that ignorance, as Mr. Taylor points out, and you would turn a frightened swashbuckler into a sane citizen of Ireland. He concludes that it is time for the British Government to seek advisers not from the politicians of Belfast but from sources which have a genuine understanding of Ireland as a whole. In his view Irish neutrality would not matter provided Ireland were strongly united and strongly defended. Such an Ireland would constitute a veritable fortress on Britain's western flank. There can be little doubt that this view is correct. Moreover, the potent influence of racial ties, propinquity and identity of fundamental spiritual values would not long permit a united Ireland to remain neutral. But it would be foolish to expect the Government of Northern Ireland to realise that their domain would be a more potent influence for good within the Irish State. In order to do so they would have to renounce the political shibboleths of a lifetime.

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II. INTERNAL PROBLEMS

IN spite of these external dangers Irish public opinion has been much concerned with the important questions of unemployment and rural organisation, both political and social. Unemployment was discussed in the Dail on August 7. Speaking during the debate, Mr. De Valera reiterated the desire of the Government to equalise the incidence of hardship so that no section of the community would suffer more than another. He expressed the opinion that a small community such as ours must be content with frugal comfort and must work harder in order to produce more. Unemployment, he said, was a problem which defied solution and an apparently "incurable blot on our social organisation". This statement is scarcely in harmony with the promises he made when in Opposition. Office, in Ireland as elsewhere, is an education.

On September 20 the Government introduced a Bill designed to expedite the execution of large-scale utility works by local authorities. During the second reading debate on October 2 Mr. P. J. Ruttledge, the Minister for Local Government, said that, while the war had adversely affected trade and industry, with a consequential increase in unemployment, housing and other public works had been maintained at a fair level, which he hoped the Bill would help to preserve. It was, he said, purely a measure to assist and enable local authorities to deal with the problem of unemployment in a bigger way. The Government has also started the formation of a Construction Corps which is to act as a non-combatant section of the Army. Their task will be to construct defence works, rifle ranges, military roads and the like. Once enrolled they will serve for a minimum period of twelve months, after which they may join the Army or return to civilian life. They will be paid a shilling a day in addition to uniform and rations. It is to be hoped that this project will be more successful than the Government's recent experiment with labour camps, which was a sorry failure. In this case there is a patriotic appeal involved which may be more potent.

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On the whole, however, we have weathered the first year of the war more successfully than was to be expected. Both exports and imports have been well maintained. The agricultural statistics show that, owing to compulsory tillage, the area tilled increased by 352,110 acres over last year. This increase was general in all crops and coupled with a bumper harvest ensures abundant supplies of food both for man and beast. An increase in the amount of bank deposits proves that the farmers are holding their own economically. On the other hand, there have been signs of late that a decrease in our agricultural exports is likely. Owing to the surplus of meat in Great Britain severe restrictions have recently been imposed on the export of cattle, sheep and bacon to that country. If these are long continued, the loss to the farmers will be considerable. The long drought this summer also seriously reduced the dairy output. The census figures for industrial production in 1938 recently published show that over a period of two years there was an increase of 60 per cent. in production. It is not probable that this rate has been maintained since. The recent report of the Electricity Supply Board shows, however, that in spite of many adverse circumstances, such as the severe drought which reduced the water power available, the extension of summer time and the reduction of the Dublin tramway load, the gross revenue of the Board increased. After payment of three-quarters of a million pounds to the Government and local authorities the Board had a profit on the year's working of £54,000. The net increase in the number of units sold during the year was over 23,000,000. In 1930 the total number of units sold was just over 43,000,000, last year it was almost 407,000,000, and during the same period the average price to the consumer has fallen from 2·66 pence per unit to 1·47 pence. At the same time the actual number of consumers has jumped from 49,000 to 173,000, and there is still abundant room for further development. Meanwhile the construction of the Liffey hydro-electric scheme is proceeding rapidly and the erection of a peat fuel generating station is under consideration. In spite of the greatly increased

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expenditure on defence our financial position has not deteriorated, and the deficit for the first five months of the year beginning April 1 is only £154,374 as compared with £1,437,719 in 1939. Revenue from customs and income tax has increased by £2,000,000 and there is therefore no reason for alarm. It must not be forgotten, however, that by far the larger part of our external investments are British, and so we cannot regard the progress of the war with indifference, however strict our neutrality.

Particular attention has been directed recently to the important problem of rural organisation. Some years ago the Rev. J. M. Hayes, an energetic Catholic curate, started a movement in Tipperary which aimed at securing co-operation amongst all sections of the rural community for the common good. This organisation, which is called *Muintir na Tire* or People of the Land, has until recently been virtually confined to its place of origin, but has achieved good work in securing the improvement of local conditions and composing labour disputes. Early this year an organiser was appointed and steps were taken to extend the organisation throughout the country. The sudden growth of this non-political body apparently alarmed the politicians, for the Government proceeded to take powers in this year's Local Government Bill to establish local or parish councils for the purpose of "furthering the general social and economic interests of the inhabitants" and empowered county councils to finance these bodies in providing buildings and equipment and maintaining them for "public meetings, lectures, exhibitions, general recreation, and other similar purposes". The establishment of such councils has been advocated for some time by Father Devane, S.J. Before the Bill had become law the Minister for Local Government hurriedly summoned a meeting of the county council secretaries in Dublin and instructed them to arrange immediately for the establishment of emergency parish councils in each parish. This move was apparently taken as a precaution in case of invasion, but, as may be imagined, it was not welcomed by *Muintir na Tire*, whose founder, Father Hayes,

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resented what he considered an attempt to forestall the growth of his movement. Speaking at Tipperary on July 20, he said that so long as parochial guilds and councils remained voluntary, so long would they have a guarantee of the survival of democracy, but, once party politics were allowed to intrude and officialism allowed to control, the death knell of parochial co-operation would have sounded. In a subsequent statement he said that his organisation favoured an elastic voluntary scheme of rural organisation and did not want its parochial guilds and councils to be subject to the routine and regulations of bureaucracy nor to be the focus of political contests. They hoped, he said, to see their organisation eventually culminating in a National Rural Council, and, with or without official recognition, they intended to continue their mission of awakening and strengthening the rural population of Ireland.

The whole question was eventually discussed in the Senate on August 28, when a resolution was proposed by Senator Martin O'Dwyer, one of the farmers' representatives, urging the Government to set up permanent parish councils in the rural areas elected by the heads of families and forming an integral part of the local government system. He argued from experience elsewhere that it was quite impossible to establish such councils on a vocational and voluntary basis as Muintir na Tire desire, and said that anything that was to be permanent must have its continuity secured by law. Senator Michael Tierney, whose views are always original and stimulating, argued that our local government system should be based on the parish which, he pointed out, was a natural unit in which the people were interested and in which they believed. He claimed that the nearer they could get to the extension of family life, the better it would be. It is certainly true that our present system of local government completely ignores the patriarchal nature of our rural life. Mr. Ruttledge, the Minister for Local Government, who spoke during the debate, only succeeded in making it clear that the Government had no very definite views on the subject and indicated that the inhabitants of each parish would be left free to decide the constitution and

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procedure of any council they might set up. It is unfortunate that vital proposals of this kind should have been launched in such a haphazard fashion and that what may constitute a revolution in our local government system should be begun without a clear and comprehensive examination of the important issues involved.

III. MR. CHURCHILL AND MR. DE VALERA ON IRISH BASES

ON November 5 Mr. Churchill, speaking in the House of Commons, made the first direct reference to the strategic importance of Ireland.

More serious [he said] than the air raids has been the recent recrudescence of U-boat sinkings in the Atlantic approaches to our islands. The fact that we cannot use the south and west coasts of Ireland to refuel our flotillas and aircraft and thus protect the trade by which Ireland as well as Great Britain lives is a most heavy and grievous burden and one which should never have been placed on our shoulders, broad though they be.

Speaking in the Dail on November 7, Mr. de Valera said that he did not know whether Mr. Churchill's statement was to be taken as a simple, perhaps a natural, statement of regret or whether it portended something more. There could be no question, he added, of leasing or handing over Irish ports so long as the country remained neutral. Any attempt to bring pressure to bear on it would only lead to bloodshed. His Government, he said, would defend their rights in respect of those ports or any part of their territory against whoever might attack them. After stating that they had never swerved from their policy of seeing that Ireland was not used as a base for attack upon Britain, he pointed out that the statement (which, it may be remarked, had not been made in any authoritative quarter in Britain) that German submarines were being supplied with fuel or provisions here was untrue, as the British Government knew. The policy of neutrality, he said,

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had been accepted not merely by the Dail but by the people as a whole, and nobody who realised what modern war meant, particularly for those who had no sufficient air defences, could have the slightest doubt that this policy was right, apart altogether from any question of sympathy for one side or the other.

It is understood that no demand whatever has been made by the British Government for permission to use the ports, and Mr. de Valera's declaration may therefore be considered as a mere reiteration, primarily for domestic consumption, of what he has so often said before. The policy of his Government is based on the assumption that we are not dependent for our safety and supplies on the British naval and air forces and that we could preserve our neutrality if they were defeated. This delusion is shared by the great majority of the Irish people, who are neither prepared nor inclined to face the issues which its abandonment involves.

Ireland,

November 1940.

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I. THE CIVILIANS' WAR

A YEAR ago this article in *THE ROUND TABLE* described the preparations made on the outbreak of war in anticipation of mass air-raids on Great Britain. The civil defence services were mobilised with the fighting services; cinemas, theatres, and other places of entertainment were closed all over the country; sport gatherings and other public meetings were forbidden; black-out restrictions were enforced; evacuation on a large scale was carried out. The weeks passed. There were no air-raids; and gradually the first restrictions were relaxed. The cinemas and theatres reopened; football matches began; and most of the evacuees trickled back to their homes. By the summer almost the only reminders of air-raid precautions were the black-out—and in the summer nights this was hardly even an inconvenience—and the thousands of patient men and women of the civil defence services, who stayed at their posts but were not wanted.

Now the air-raids have happened, and it is interesting to compare the reactions of the Government and the people to the fear of the event and to the event itself. It is not, of course, true to say that the bombing began with the mass attacks on London on September 7. Enforcedly anonymous towns in the north-east and south-west experienced raids long before the capital; and on the night of November 14 a savage attack was made on Coventry, which was on a scale equal to, and probably greater than, anything London has yet experienced, while in proportion to the population the number of casualties (at least 250 killed and 800 injured) was far larger than in any night raid on London. But London has suffered more continuously than other cities. The total casualty list is far smaller than was expected; but of the 13,288 killed and the 19,310 injured in the whole country in September and October, about

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four-fifths were in the London area. London, too, presents all aspects of the problem—inadequacy of public shelters, division of responsibility between local and central authorities, lack of co-ordination in the welfare services, transport difficulties, evacuation and billeting.

To begin with, the London raids, which consisted mostly of constant warnings, without bombs, were regarded merely as a nuisance, as an interruption to work by day and sleep by night. The Government's year-old directions on What to Do In An Air-raid were taken to heart; in many cases work stopped, transport was suspended, restaurants, banks, post offices and shops closed, and people went to their shelters. But before a week of this life was over both Government and people realised that it could not go on—the Government because it saw that the siren was hindering the war effort almost as effectively as bombs, the people because they were bored with what seemed a futile upsetting of their normal life. Mr. Churchill voiced the new attitude in the House of Commons on September 5 when he said that "Constant alarms come to be something in the nature of no alarm, yet while they give no protection to very great numbers of people who take no notice of them, they undoubtedly exercise a disturbing effect upon necessary war work". He therefore suggested that the siren should be regarded as an alert rather than an alarm, and said that the warning system would be investigated to see if it could be modified.

Two days later the bombing of London began in earnest, and in the circumstances it was not found possible to make any change—except to curtail the duration of the warning by one-half. But, after perhaps the first few days, there was no change in the general tendency to ignore the warnings in the daytime. Some offices and Government departments had already begun to organise a system of roof spotters, whose task after the alert had been sounded was to give warning when the danger appeared to be local, a system which was already in operation in some factories in the provinces; and after the bombing started it was gradually adopted by big shops, restaurants,

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banks, post offices and road transport services as well, so that the alert has come to have little or no effect on London's normal life. The main-line railways had always shown a remarkable sense of public duty by continuing their services throughout air-raids. Buses now did the same, even at night, except when bombs appeared to be falling in the vicinity. There have, of course, been temporary suspensions of train services owing to actual damage, and an added strain has consequently been placed upon alternative routes and the buses. But, as a whole, the delays in transport are not much worse than at the beginning of the war when so many bus and train services were curtailed—they are not nearly so bad as they were at the time of the Great Snow last winter. Nor have there been more than local breakdowns in other public utility services. Only the post office has failed to show the same sense of improvisation, and postal delays and telephone breakdowns are a serious inconvenience.

In smaller cities the danger is naturally more immediately local than in the large London area, but it is broadly true to say that the places that take most precautions are those that have suffered least. In almost all districts that experience constant or frequent air-raids the public has contrived to forget the early exhortations to take cover. In fact, in London, air-raids have become such a constant background to civilian life that after two months even the spotters' warning is frequently ignored. When it is recalled that at the beginning of the war the siren made almost the whole population of a large part of the country dive to their shelters because an unidentified aircraft had crossed the coast, the normality of life under fire is amazing. That the people should show courage was, perhaps, expected. But this extraordinary nonchalance was quite unlooked for and is an even greater source of strength.

At night, when bombers are droning almost ceaselessly overhead, there is not, of course, the same normality. There was no need this time for the Government to prohibit theatres and other entertainments, for the people's good sense has imposed its own curfew. London theatres, which in the week

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of warnings without raids had normal audiences, closed, for evening performances, the Monday after the bombing began, and all cinemas arranged to close at 9 p.m. The same process of local adaptation is at work in other parts of the country where raids are frequent; and the spirit of empiricism in which civilian life under fire is now being organised is proving far more successful than the laying down of rules which characterised September 1939.

II. SHELTER POLICY

THREE is another and grimmer side to London's night life in air-raids. Soon after the bombing started, people from the East End and from other poor parts of the capital began to use the Underground railways as shelters for the night. This was quite contrary to the Government's wishes, for it had been stated over and over again that the Undergrounds were not to be used as air-raid shelters. But policy had to give way before the wishes of the people, which were made known in an unmistakable fashion—the shelterers simply went to the stations and took up their places for the night—and now from 4 o'clock in the afternoon some stations already have their night dwellers ensconced on the platforms, while queues for them begin to form about lunch-time.

The Government's big reversal of policy over the use of Undergrounds as shelters was probably influenced by its realisation that in the matter of public shelter provision its conscience was far from clear. Long before war broke out the deep-shelter controversy had been fought over both in and out of Parliament, and Mr. Chamberlain's Government had always rejected proposals to build such shelters, partly on the ground of expense, partly because of its general attitude of not committing itself to any big war project in the hope that the war would not come, and partly because its whole air-raid precaution policy was based on the principle of dispersal, that is, evacuation and individual shelters for homes and workplaces. Thus, the local authorities, who were left to provide public shelters

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as part of their civil defence preparations, were given grants towards the expense, but they were discouraged from putting into force any seemingly extravagant scheme, and local finance in Great Britain is such that very few local authorities could afford even a limited one. The result was that, when the raids started, public shelter accommodation was gravely inadequate and consisted mostly of some requisitioned basements, trenches in parks, and a few surface shelters of brick and concrete in the streets. This was not noticeable by day, for the simple reason that, as has been said, the people do not take cover; or if they do, most of them take it in the shelters provided in their own workplaces; for owners of commercial buildings and mines and occupiers of factories, where more than 50 persons work, are required by law to provide adequate shelter accommodation for their tenants or employees.

But it never seems to have occurred to either the central or the local authorities that the public shelters would be slept in. Every household below an income limit of £250 a year had the right to an Anderson steel shelter, and it was thought that those who wanted shelter at night but could not afford to provide it for themselves were therefore adequately covered. It is quite true that the Anderson shelter, where it has been properly fixed, has been very successful, and for many households it is probably the best sort of protection to give. But for the slums of London and other big cities an Anderson shelter is useless, because households who live in tenement buildings or slum houses have simply nowhere to put it. And it is households such as these who need protection most, for their homes are jerry-built and crowded together in vulnerable areas round docks or other military targets. Practical considerations alone, therefore, should have persuaded the Government to see that in such districts there was shelter accommodation fit for sleeping in. Moreover, though the dispersal principle is rational and sound, because no shelter can give 100 per cent. protection, it is completely opposed to the herd instinct which even makes some of those with Anderson shelters in their own gardens leave them and join their

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fellows in the Underground railways. Dispersal may be safe and crowding dangerous. But the feeling that there is safety in numbers is deeply instinctive and cannot be ignored.

The problem should not be exaggerated. Eighty-five per cent. of London's population sleep in their own homes or their own shelters. But the small minority, who at night only feel safe in deep shelters and in the company of their fellows, have a right to be indulged.

The Government was, therefore, wise in giving way over the Undergrounds. But in the provinces other measures have to be taken, and the fact that queues form at such an early hour for places in the stations shows that they alone do not solve even London's problem. Soon, however, the Tubes are to be extended by tunnelling; and deep shelters will be built in other parts of the country where tunnelling is practicable. Moreover, local authorities have been given wide powers over basements and business shelters at times when they are not being used by the employees; they have, too, been relieved of all financial responsibility which is to be borne by the central Government; and the Minister of Home Security will step over the head of any local authority which is reluctant to take action. Much of this work will not, of course, be complete before the winter is over. In the meantime, the Government hopes to improve the existing conditions by instituting a ticket system, which will help to abolish queues, and by installing bunks in public shelters.

The main part of the Government's dispersal policy was evacuation. In the early months of the war evacuation broke down for a variety of reasons, but chiefly because the billeting side was not thought out at all and was left to the good nature of the householder in the reception areas. Again on the grounds of expense and in the hope that there would be no war, the Government rejected the idea of country camps where schools could go as schools—public opinion did prevail to the extent that about 30 camps have been built, but altogether they only accommodate some 6,000 children. By the summer, therefore, most of the evacuated children were back in their

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homes again. After the occupation of the Low Countries and the fall of France fresh attempts were made to move the children from London and certain other towns, vulnerable to invasion or air attacks; but the efforts were only partly successful, and when the bombing started there were still over 400,000 schoolchildren in Greater London and the Thames-side and Medway towns. It had always been said that nothing short of mass raids themselves would persuade the parents of these children to send them away; and it is true that the first raids did start a migration, official and unofficial, not only of schoolchildren but of women, babies and even men as well. In this fresh dispersal the Government has given every assistance. The intermediate evacuation schemes had been for schoolchildren only. Now, mothers, too, are encouraged to go with their children both of school age and under; those who can make private arrangements are given free travel vouchers and lodging allowances in necessitous cases. More nursery schools have been started for children under five without their mothers. Even the aged and infirm, who would otherwise sleep in public shelters or who are ill, can be taken to hospitals in the country.

Almost all the unessential population has, therefore, the chance of leaving the city, but more of the adults remain than have gone, and in the whole London region there are still 250,000 schoolchildren. The reasons are the same to-day as they were a year ago: dislike of breaking up family life and leaving a husband and, perhaps, children of over school age behind, or, perhaps, an aged relative to whom a hospital in the country means the workhouse which he, or she, has always striven to avoid. And, once again, billeting in the reception areas is causing grave difficulties. The householders in the safe towns and villages have, on the whole, given a generous welcome to the bombed refugees. But there are still places where large houses go evacuee-free, while small houses are overflowing. The local authorities have been urged by the Minister of Health to use their compulsory billeting powers where necessary, but it is such a distasteful task, and

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so unfortunate in its results both for the householder and the evacuee, that it is not surprising that they shrink from it, especially as they themselves may be interested parties. Wide sympathy is felt for the bombed people, but it is only fair that some should also be shown for the reception areas which have had their population increased, in some cases, by 50 per cent., and which are asked at a moment's notice to provide homes, with all the cooking facilities and sanitary arrangements that that entails, for whole families of strangers. They are mostly willing to play their part and share their comparative safety with those who have suffered for them. But evacuation as a long-term measure cannot be successful so long as it is based on private billeting.

The other side of the Government's civil defence policy, the fighting side, has, on the whole, worked admirably. There has been no conscription for wardens, firemen, demolition squads and the other civil defence services; they have all joined up of their own free will; many of them have their peace-time jobs by day; many of them are unpaid; and the average salary for the full-time paid workers is only £3 a week. All of them have had weary months of waiting, while a section of the press and the public said they were an unnecessary extravagance. Those of them who have now been tested have shown themselves brave and efficient.

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BUT the Government's civil defence policy stopped at air-raid precautions. It never visualised the time when precautions—dispersal, filling sandbags, distributing gas masks, training wardens and firemen and organising medical aid for casualties—would not be enough. It never considered the social problems that would arise from evacuation, still less the welfare of those who have been bombed and lost their homes and all their possessions. It had, it is true, provided by law for temporary injury allowances and disability pensions to be paid to the injured; and compensation in full is paid

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immediately for essential furniture and clothing to households with a combined income of not more than £400 a year and to individuals with an income of not more than £250. But there was, at first, no central plan for housing, feeding, clothing and employing the thousands who have lost their homes or their businesses or both. Injury allowances are the function of the Ministry of Pensions; compensation is paid by the Assistance Board; housing is the responsibility of the local borough council; and there was no organisation for giving hot meals or for providing clothing until compensation should be obtained. These were left to voluntary social services and to charity.

It was not until London had been bombed for three weeks that the central Government began to assume a more active responsibility for air-raid welfare. Two Special Commissioners were then appointed for London; one to co-ordinate the care and rehousing of the homeless, and the other to supervise the repair of roads and public utilities. Another Regional Commissioner was also appointed to supervise the conditions in public shelters. The Ministry of Food began to organise emergency feeding centres with mobile kitchens which would be independent of local heating and water-supplies—why such an obvious and necessary arrangement was not planned in advance was not explained—and the London County Council began to co-ordinate the billeting arrangements so that homeless persons from one London borough could be housed in buildings requisitioned in another.

The change in the Government's shelter policy has already been described. Another change of policy has been over the question of war-risk insurance for property. As long ago as 1937 the Government had declared that it was not practicable to have a scheme of insurance to cover war risks on land, and this decision was endorsed by the Weir Committee shortly after the war began. The Committee came to its conclusion chiefly because the defence experts had given such a big estimate of the possible scale of the damage; moreover, the Treasury took the line that no scheme could be accepted

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which might promise unlimited financial compensation out of public funds. At present, therefore, if a house is damaged by bombs the local authorities may carry out first-aid repairs, having regard to the total available housing accommodation in the district—though they have been asked to interpret this proviso generously and to give first aid to as many houses as possible. More elaborate repairs can be undertaken by the owner; he must pay for them himself and leave the question of compensation until after the war. Compensation for unrepairable houses is also deferred until then. But the building casualties, like the human ones, are so much less than was expected that Mr. Churchill was able to announce that a Bill would be introduced providing for a nation-wide scheme of insurance to property which would be retrospective. The terms of the Bill are not yet known, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer has indicated that it will be in two parts: compulsory insurance for buildings, plant and machinery, and optional insurance for furniture and personal effects.

Steps are thus gradually being taken to adapt civilian life to a background of air-raids, which is what civil defence policy now implies. But before many of them can be completed or put into effect, there is a serious danger lest illness does what the bombs have so far failed to do—take a heavy toll of civilian life. The public shelters, especially the Undergrounds, with their crowds of people, lack of adequate sanitary arrangements and poor ventilation, are excellent breeding-grounds for infectious diseases, which may be expected to run riot among people whose resistance is weakened by long waits in queues—frequently, too, in the rain—and uncomfortable nights with little sleep. There is, too, the possibility of bomb damage to water-supplies and sewers and the risk of typhoid. In addition to the air-raid danger, the problem is aggravated by the presence, at home, of a large Army, for some diseases are notorious camp-followers. Parliament has debated this question of the nation's health, and the Government is fully alive to the shelter danger and is seeing that each public shelter is inspected regularly and is given proper sanitary equipment. For each big one, there

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is, too, to be a nurse in attendance and a medical officer at hand, and those who contract infectious or serious illnesses will be removed to hospital. But it will be some time before the public shelters are anything like fit for habitation at night, whereas diseases march rapidly. If the country can get through its first winter of air-raids without a major epidemic, it will be more through good fortune than good management.

Although the effect of air-raids on health is still uncertain, there can be no doubt about the big blow they have dealt to education. In London, in the London County Council area alone, there are still over 100,000 schoolchildren, but the average attendance at the L.C.C. schools is only 20,000. In many neutral areas alerts are constant, and the children spend a great part of their school day in the shelters where teaching is makeshift at its best. In most reception areas schools are full to overflowing, and schooling is in many places only half-time. A drastic reorganisation of school accommodation, more imagination, and a lively sense of improvisation are necessary if a large section of the country's children is not to grow up completely uneducated and undisciplined.

All these problems thrown up by air-raids—evacuation, shelters, welfare—emphasise the weaknesses of local government in England. The local authorities are, naturally, the obvious agents for carrying out the policy of the central Government with regard to such matters. But too often that policy has been declared on the lines of what local authorities may do instead of what they must do, and in many cases has consequently remained ineffective. Some months before the war broke out the Government realised that the civil defence preparations of the various local authorities should be co-ordinated; and Regional Commissioners were appointed, at first eleven for England and Wales and one for Scotland, whose task was to supervise the civil defence services of the various local authorities included in their regions. They were, for instance, to see that air-raid workers from one town or district could be made available in another in the event of an emergency.

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Later on, the functions of the Regional Commissioners were enlarged, and their offices were made the basis of shadow Governments which would operate if for some reason contact with the central Government were to break down. When first some coastal strips and then all Great Britain were declared defence areas in the summer, the regulation under which the declaration was made gave the Commissioners executive powers for the purpose of defence. By another regulation the Home Secretary can, if an emergency justifies it, make an order empowering the Commissioners to make bye-laws—local defence regulations—for any of the purposes for which the central Government can make them under the Emergency Powers Acts.

As these Regional Commissioners were not popularly elected, but were appointed by the Government, they are free from the petty squabbles and intrigues of local politics, and it is a pity that in such things as billeting evacuees the Government has not relied more upon them instead of issuing appeals to smaller councils. The bombing of London also quickly showed how wasteful and ineffective a lot of semi-independent authorities in one city can be, though in Coventry the lesson of London seems to have been taken to heart, for the Regional Commissioner stepped in at once to mobilise all the different welfare services which were needed.

It is, of course, too early to assess the value of the regional organisations. But the necessity of a reorganisation of local government and, in particular, local finance had been recognised long before war broke out; and it is therefore not unlikely that regionalism of some sort will survive after the war is over.

IV. GOVERNMENT CHANGES

IN the beginning of October some big changes were made in the Cabinet. The most notable was the retirement of Mr. Chamberlain owing to the illness from which he died on November 9. It had long been regarded as unfortunate that a

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man whose appeasement policy was so completely belied by events and whose leadership, when appeasement had turned into hostilities, was so utterly inadequate should remain, together with his chief colleagues, in Mr. Churchill's Government. But, however disastrous his policy, there could be no doubt concerning the deep sincerity of Mr. Chamberlain's wish to defeat Hitlerism once he had been convinced of its real meaning. It is enough to recall his speech on March 18 after the Germans had entered Prague, or his broadcast on the outbreak of the war, when he spoke of the "evil things" we are fighting against, or his broadcast on the day of his resignation from the Premiership to realise that though his methods might be open to question his determination and courage were beyond reproach. As a Prime Minister, he was too arrogant in his dealings with Parliament to win the whole-hearted support even of his own party, and his policy was never national enough to gain the entire confidence of the people. But he was an indefatigable worker and an excellent departmental head; it was his unfortunate Premiership that caused people to forget his many qualities for governing. There was no real regret at his retirement, but there was universal and spontaneous regret that he had to die before victory was assured.

Mr. Chamberlain's ill health was such that he retired completely from politics and resigned the leadership of the Conservative party. This was immediately offered to and accepted by Mr. Churchill—a natural election in that the Prime Minister should be the leader of his own party, but unnatural in that Mr. Churchill has never really been a party man. Before the war he was more outspoken about the deficiencies of the Conservative Government of Mr. Chamberlain than the official Opposition. He is the people's Prime Minister in a way that no other Prime Minister has ever been. His leadership of the Conservative party removes a political anomaly, but that is all.

The vacancy in the War Cabinet, caused by Mr. Chamberlain's retirement, was filled by Sir John Anderson, who took also Mr. Chamberlain's office of Lord President of the Council. This involved other departmental changes. Sir John's former

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office of Secretary of State for Home Affairs and Minister of Home Security was filled by Mr. Herbert Morrison. As Minister of Supply, Mr. Morrison had not quite come up to popular expectation. He was too much inclined to rely on personal appeals instead of formulating policies. But his appeals did achieve a big acceleration in the production of war materials; and since he is happier dealing with human beings than with machines, he should be much more in his element at the Home Office, where he was immediately confronted with the human problems caused by air-raids. The improvement in the social conditions of the bombed cities and in the provision of shelters dates from his appointment.

The new Minister of Supply is Sir Andrew Duncan, who was brought in from outside Parliament to the Board of Trade last January. The new President of the Board of Trade is Captain Oliver Lyttelton, also a newcomer to politics, who was formerly a director of mining companies. A new office was created—a Ministry of Works and Buildings—to which Sir John Reith, now Lord Reith, was appointed. The Ministry is not to be concerned with grandiose schemes for rebuilding London or other bombed cities. Its immediate functions are limited and utilitarian and are concerned chiefly with the erection of new civil works and buildings required by any other Government Department, a function formerly exercised by the Office of Works, and determining the priority of proposals for rebuilding buildings damaged by air-raids. Sir John Reith was succeeded at the Ministry of Transport by Lieutenant-Colonel J. T. C. Moore-Brabazon, who had at one time been Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry. Lord Caldecote left the Government to become Lord Chief Justice in the place of Lord Hewart who retired, and the vacancy at the Dominions Office was filled by Lord Cranborne, who had been Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs when Mr. Eden was Foreign Secretary.

This was the end of the departmental changes. But, in addition, the War Cabinet was enlarged by the inclusion of Sir Kingsley Wood, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr.

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Ernest Bevin, Minister of Labour. This has once again raised the question of the proper size and scope of a War Cabinet. When Mr. Churchill first formed his Government, he appointed as members of his War Cabinet men who were free from all departmental duties, with the single exception of Lord Halifax. When Lord Beaverbrook joined it in August the principle was departed from, for he retained his office as Minister of Aircraft Production. Now two more departmental members have been appointed, and the War Cabinet of Mr. Churchill has become as unreal a thing as that of Mr. Chamberlain. With the exception of the Prime Minister himself, it contains very few men of outstanding talent—in fact, there are as many good Ministers outside as there are in it. It began as a political Cabinet, a Cabinet which would provide the visible signs of the adhesion of Labour by the inclusion of Labour's leaders, and the promotion of Sir Kingsley Wood and Mr. Bevin, the one a Conservative and the other Labour, seems to imply that as a political Cabinet it will go on. This is a pity, and quite unnecessary, because neither Parliament nor the country is politically minded.

Great Britain,
November 1940.

SOUTH AFRICA

I. THE WAR EFFORT OF THE UNION

IN a recent issue of *THE ROUND TABLE** an account was given of the condition of the Union's defences at the outbreak of war, of the formidable problems of neglect which General Smuts inherited from his predecessor in the Department of Defence, Mr. Pirow, and of the strategic conceptions which have led the Union to preserve its own frontiers by assisting in the defence of the British territories that lie to the North. As was then explained, the internal politics of South Africa make it necessary for General Smuts to rely entirely upon volunteers for service outside the political boundaries of the Union, and pledges have been given to this effect. As a result the South African Army that is now in East Africa co-operating with British forces drawn from many other parts of the British Commonwealth is composed wholly of volunteers—men who are distinguished from other South African troops still in South Africa by the "orange tab" they wear on their shoulder straps, and who have volunteered to serve "anywhere in Africa" in defence of their country. The South African contingent in East Africa is already stationed on the Kenya frontier and by the time this article is published may have been in action and may have proved its worth against the Italians. The troops arrived in Kenya in July after the advance-guard had paved the way for their coming. Since then large reinforcements have arrived in Kenya from South Africa and there are thousands more who will follow. And from aerodromes on the borders of Kenya and from other points in that country, South African airmen have for many weeks—indeed, ever since Italy's entry into the war in June—been attacking Italian aerodromes, transport and troop concentrations and other

* No. 119, June 1940, p. 712.

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similar objectives in Abyssinia with a courage and tenacity of purpose that have enhanced the reputation that South African airmen rightly earned during the last war.

But we have anticipated the story of how it became possible for South African troops, fully equipped, well-trained and ready for action, to be in East Africa within ten months of the outbreak of war. It is a story of achievement—a miracle of achievement, of which South Africa is justly proud. It is necessary to emphasise that the South African army now in Kenya has been equipped from head to foot from purely South African resources and that the ammunition it has and the bombs its airmen drop upon Italian aerodromes have been produced in South Africa. And all this in spite of the fact that when General Smuts took charge of the Department of Defence in September last year there were all the deficiencies that were enumerated in the previous article on Defence.

Those deficiencies have been made good—and more than made good. It is now no secret that the South African production of small ammunition is now so large that it has been possible to contribute supplies to the common pool of Commonwealth resources. It is also no secret that South African industry is producing aerial bombs of all sizes, trench mortars in increasing numbers, shells of varying calibres in impressive quantity, and other arms and ammunition, and has even made progress in the number of howitzers it can produce. Armoured cars are also among the numerous weapons that are being produced from South African factories, and the growing number of mechanised units in service with South African troops in East Africa is evidence of the concentrated power of the small but highly organised heavy industries of the Union. It is inadvisable to give figures—they may be valuable, even if unpleasant, to the enemy—but were it possible to disclose the facts, the peoples of the British Commonwealth would be not less surprised than the South Africans themselves at the war effort of the Union. Nor do the matters already mentioned exhaust the war activities of South African industry. The equipment of the troops—boots, socks, uniforms, blankets,

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beds and mattresses; the provision of food-stuffs for the South-African forces as well as British forces—bully beef, canned fish, canned fruit, biscuits and numerous other commodities; medical supplies and hospital comforts; hangars for aerodromes; corrugated iron for base camps and offices: all these and many other items besides are being produced in a country which only a year ago had made no effort to convert its industries to war production.

These represent the achievements on the industrial side of South Africa's war effort. They are achievements made possible through the enthusiastic co-operation of industry and labour. The trade unions have accepted willingly the dilution of labour by which alone such an expansion of industrial activity has been possible. The engineering workshops of the Witwatersrand, established for the purpose of meeting the requirements of the gold-mining industry, have not only continued to supply the mines with essential items but have expanded their activities on a carefully organised and co-ordinated basis to meet the requirements of the Department of Defence. The state steel industry has proved its adaptability and, despite the numerous and ever-increasing claims upon its output, has been able to divert most of its activities to war production without depriving mining and other industries of essential supplies. The Chairman of the South African Iron and Steel Industrial Corporation, Dr. H. J. van der Bijl, has been largely responsible for the organisation and co-ordination of the country's industrial war effort. As Director-General of War Supplies, Dr. van der Bijl has shown driving force, enterprise and a clear vision of essentials. There have been gaps that he has not been able to fill; there has been friction between industrial units; and there has been a certain amount of overlapping and in some cases even a failure to utilise to its maximum capacity the productive resources of industry: but such incidents are inevitable when a vast organisation has to be hastily improvised to meet an emergency, and it can be justly said that Dr. van der Bijl and his technical advisers and colleagues have achieved a very considerable feat of organisation. The work of the

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Directorate-General of War Supplies has been a complete justification of General Smuts's far-sighted decision in divorcing from military control the organisation and co-ordination of war production. The results are seen in the provision within less than a year of adequate supplies of all the essential military equipment that South Africa totally lacked at the outbreak of war.

The organisation of the industrial war effort naturally imposed a heavy strain upon the limited reserve of skilled labour in the Union. As a first essential it was necessary to introduce a system whereby key men in industry, whose natural inclinations were to volunteer for military service, could be retained for the equally important national service of industrial war production. The system, like all such systems, is open to abuse and gives rise to numerous anomalies, but in general it has operated satisfactorily in the Union, with much benefit to the industrial war effort. But the retention of key men in industry and the mobilisation of the skilled labour resources of the country have not been sufficient to meet the demands for an enlarged and accelerated industrial output. Moreover, more and more men of the artisan class have been needed for the all-important work of constructing, assembling and servicing the ever-increasing number of modern aeroplanes that South Africa has been receiving from overseas. It was recognised at a very early stage in the war that South Africa could not have too many skilled or semi-skilled craftsmen, and therefore, with the co-operation and consent of the trade unions, a comprehensive scheme for technical training of man-power was launched. Some 12,000 men were needed, and the scheme provided for an intensive training of personnel in the more elementary technicalities of engineering workshops. It has not been possible to obtain all the men required, despite the attractive rates of pay and the facilities offered, but several thousands of semi-skilled workers have already passed out of the technical colleges in various parts of the country into war industry, and the training of further thousands of men is proceeding vigorously. Industrial experts believe that the

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Basic Technical Training Scheme, coupled with the expansion of industry under war conditions, is laying a sound basis for a more prosperous industrial era in South Africa after the war.

The needs of industry and political dissension within the Union have placed limitations upon the man-power to which General Smuts could look for volunteers for his army. But it is an astonishing fact that, despite these limitations, the percentage of the available European male population of the Union that has volunteered for military service is actually higher than in any other Dominion. General Smuts accepted as the basis for the expansion of the South African Army the proposals that his predecessor had not carried out. Those proposals provided for three Active Citizen Force divisions totalling 67,000 men; three special defence rifle brigades totalling 10,000 men; and three defence rifle field forces totalling 60,000 men—a grand total of 137,000 men. General Smuts has stuck to these figures in general. Training of the three Active Citizen Force divisions has proceeded intensively. In addition the recruiting and training of two mounted brigades have been in progress for some months, and General Smuts's proposal is that these two mounted brigades should be attached to two of the Active Citizen Force divisions, thus giving the South African Army a mobility in bush warfare that may well prove to be of paramount importance in future operations. Training camps have been established at Premier Mine, Sonderwater, Potchefstroom, Oudtshoorn, Ladysmith, Pietermaritzburg and Barberton.

These bald facts and figures cannot tell the story of unremitting and intensive effort that has been necessary to build up South Africa's new army. General Smuts and his subordinates in the Department of Defence had to start virtually from the beginning. The nucleus of instructors in the Permanent Force was quite inadequate for the training of a large body of citizens whose military education had been at best sporadic and elementary. New instructors had to be trained; staff officers had to be found and trained: military camps had

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to be built: transport services had to be organised; medical, dental and hospital services had to be established; the Quarter-master-General's section had to be rapidly expanded; army postal services had to be established; a large clerical staff for army pay and other purposes had to be recruited: and in numerous similar directions a host of detailed work for which no preparations had been made has had to be performed under the most trying conditions of congestion and lack of facilities. There have been muddles and inefficiencies; an early unwillingness to decentralise led to accumulated confusion in the army pay section of the Department; there have been complaints alleging lack of medical facilities; there has been a temporary shortage of uniforms and a lack of equipment: but if these shortages, muddles and confusions have occurred they have been trifling in relation to the immense achievements of the Defence Department in the short space of one year. Whenever confusion or muddling has become apparent, General Smuts has acted decisively. A Cabinet Committee is continuously in session reviewing the work of the Defence Department: overlapping is being eliminated: co-ordination of effort is being fostered and waste is being minimised. Another Cabinet Committee with technical advisers has been specially appointed to eliminate delays and to determine priorities.

All this work would not have been necessary had it not been for the overwhelming response the people of South Africa have given to the call for national service. Political dissension exists, but the opposition to the Government's war policy is more bitter and more vocal than its numerical following is large. That fact is proved by the very large number of Afrikaans-speaking men who have volunteered for service "anywhere in Africa". There has been no lack of recruits, and General Smuts has obtained his volunteers without any concerted or elaborate recruiting campaign.

Space does not permit any detailed survey of other aspects of South Africa's defence organisation. Various units have been established for specific purposes; for instance, the Essential Services Protection Corps is composed of men unfit for

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ordinary military duties; but these men are doing useful service in guarding power-stations, factories, bridges, railway lines and oil storage depots and thus have released for active service men who would otherwise have to be employed on guard duty at these points. Ex-servicemen of the last war who are too old for active service have been organised into reserve battalions and are receiving training. These units, together with the very large Police Reserve which has also been established on a military basis, constitute the forces upon which General Smuts could call in the event of enemy penetration as far south as the Union. Thousands of men have been enrolled in these different units.

Special mention should be made also of the contribution which the women of South Africa are making in full measure to the Union's war-effort. Two organisations of women form part of the nation's regular military forces. These are the Women's Auxiliary Air Force, numbering already more than 800, and the Women's Army Auxiliary Service whose members take the place of fighting men in carrying out transport and clerical duties. In addition there is the South African Women's Auxiliary Service, a voluntary civilian organisation recognised by the Defence Department whose branches in every part of the country are engaged in running hostels and canteens and in providing hospital requirements and comforts for the troops.

Finally no account of the national effort would be complete without recording the contribution that is being made by the non-European section of the population. From these there is an excellent response to the call for enlistment in the various types of non-combatant service open to them. Several thousand have already enlisted in mechanical transport and labour units or as pioneers or stretcher-bearers.

Provision has also been made for the effective defence of the South African coast. Many young South Africans have enrolled in the Seaward Defence Force under Rear-Admiral Hallifax and a great deal of useful patrol work and mine-sweeping has been done in close co-operation with the Royal

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Navy. The usefulness of this force was shown last May when a mine-field off Cape Agulhas was located and swept up by craft of the Seaward Defence Force.

The vital importance of air training has not been overlooked. On the outbreak of the war South Africa's Air Force consisted of three squadrons—one bomber-fighter squadron, one army co-operation and general purposes squadron and one trainer squadron. South Africa had, however, many more pilots than machines and, having obtained modern aeroplanes from overseas, has been able to send to East Africa a formidable air force which has already proved its worth in operations against the Italians over Abyssinia. In the Union there is tremendous air activity. All civil aerodromes have been taken over by the Department of Defence; several new aerodromes have been established; portable hangars are rising like mushrooms on the flat South African veld and training of airmen is proceeding intensively. It is not desirable to reveal at present the full extent of South Africa's air-training activities, but when the facts are revealed the full degree of South Africa's preparations for air warfare will astonish the public. Although South Africa preferred not to participate in the original Empire Air Training Scheme, the part she is actually playing in providing facilities for the training of British airmen under the very favourable conditions existing in South Africa is proportionately more than equal to the air effort of other Dominions.

With the indications of an Italian offensive against Egypt and the possibility of an Axis move down the West Coast of Africa, the Union is becoming more conscious than ever of the important rôle it may be called upon to play in this war. The possibility of air-raids, at one time so remote, is now viewed with some anxiety, and active steps have been taken to establish Civilian Protection Services in the larger cities and towns of the Union.

These are only some of the activities that constitute South Africa's war effort. That effort gains strength with every day that passes, and South Africa is not ashamed of the contribution she is making towards the ultimate victory of those

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principles of liberty, truth and justice for which we are proud to fight.

II. THE SESSION

IN the last number of *THE ROUND TABLE* it was foreseen that Parliament would have to be summoned in September or October 1940, because more money would be wanted than the amount provided earlier in the year. Actually, Parliament was called together on August 24. It sat for precisely three weeks, adjourning on September 14 till January 27 next year.

The main purpose of this early part of the current session was financial. Mr. Hofmeyr's budget is described elsewhere. But the Government also found itself compelled to amend the War Measures legislation which was passed before Parliament was prorogued. General Hertzog, too, the Leader of the Opposition, desired to move a peace motion, and the Government was willing to grant opportunity for this. These three topics might have taken up almost unlimited time, for the Opposition came to Parliament in a truculent mood and had advertised far and wide in the country constituencies its belief that the Government's time had come and that it could be driven from power as soon as Parliament assembled. Forewarned, however, was fore-armed for the Government. General Smuts had prepared a plan to counter the Opposition's threats. As soon as Parliament met, he announced the Government's intention to limit the time which this first part of the session would take. A comprehensive guillotine procedure had been devised. For the budget debate and for each stage of the Appropriation Bills, as well as for each stage of the War Measures Amendment Bill, a set number of hours was to be allotted. The first week was given over to the passage of the necessary guillotine resolutions and to General Hertzog's peace motion. After that, the time-schedule operated mechanically. Government calculations worked out to the minute. The Government's promise to the members of its group that this first part of the session would not last more than three

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weeks in all was exactly fulfilled. Still, the experiment of a wholly guillotine-ruled session was hardly one to be repeated by a Government which considers the health and endurance of its supporters.

In this instance the Government side stood the strain much better than the Opposition, which was weakened by several circumstances. General Hertzog, for one thing, had made up his mind that no pairs should be allowed on his side. This determination operated, as it turned out, much more against the Opposition than against the Government, whose supporters regarded themselves as sentries at their posts on the home front and behaved accordingly. Opposition back-benchers, on the other hand, were much less amenable to discipline and kept drifting away, to the despair of their whips. The Government majority, accordingly, after establishing itself at its proper maximum—18—in defeating General Hertzog's peace motion, gradually rose on subsequent divisions, owing to Opposition absences, to 25 or more. The significance of these figures will hardly be lost in the country constituencies returning Opposition members. These constituencies had been over-fed with Opposition forecasts of almost certain Government defeat when Parliament met. Instead, they watched mounting Government majorities and must have realised, by the end of the three weeks' sitting, that the Government, far from facing any prospect of defeat while this Parliament lasts (it can continue, by the way, till May 1943), has demonstrated its vitality beyond all reasonable doubt.

Another weakening circumstance for the Opposition was internal dissension. Before Parliament met there had been only too evident signs of discontent with General Hertzog's leadership. There is not space here to enumerate these signs. Their existence, and the discontent to which they pointed, are not seriously denied in Opposition circles. At the beginning of the session there were constant Opposition meetings in caucus. General Hertzog, who does not suffer malcontents in his party with any patience, appears to have demanded a formal resolution of confidence in his leadership. Instead

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there emerged from the Opposition caucus, a few days later, an extraordinary series of resolutions, the main effect of which was an expression of confidence in Dr. Malan, as deputy-leader of the Opposition, as well as in General Hertzog as leader. The inferences were too obvious to be hidden; and, if any further confirmation of internal Opposition trouble was needed, the Opposition Front Bench during the session provided it. Attendance by the Opposition leaders was spasmodic; gaps were the rule rather than the exception; and the actual leadership appeared to be left, very often, to some comparatively insignificant front-bencher or even back-bencher.*

But the main reason for the Opposition's ineffectiveness was the collapse of the theory about the war to which it pinned its faith when the session began. General Hertzog based his peace motion, moved in the first week of the session, wholly on the assumption that Germany had already won the war. France, said General Hertzog, had been eliminated from the ranks of Germany's enemies; Italy had been added to Germany's allies in arms—Italy, whose 5,000,000 to 7,000,000 "well-trained soldiers" were "already in possession of war achievements nowhere, so far as we are aware, in this conflict so far surpassed by British acts of bravery". This sneer, so startlingly revealing the nature of General Hertzog's war-views and knowledge, actually elicited, by its very weirdness, loud

* On November 6, after a secret sitting of the Nationalist party Congress at Bloemfontein, General Hertzog resigned the leadership of the party. He was followed by Mr. Havenga, the former Minister of Finance, and most of the other Hertzogite delegates at the Congress. Thus the combination formed by the Hertzogite and Malanite sections of the Nationalist party a year ago in order to combat General Smuts's war policy has been broken up. After his resignation General Hertzog announced that he did not contemplate the formation of a new party at present and he advised his followers to vote for the candidate supporting General Smuts at the forthcoming parliamentary by-election. He is reported to have said (*The Times*, November 8, 1940) that South Africans must rely on themselves and not on Germany, and to have reiterated his respect for the English-speaking section of the people and the necessity of co-operating with them. [Ed.]

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laughter from the Government benches. General Herzog proceeded to enunciate his conviction that "the war is already completely lost to the Allies, in so far as they still exist"; that the British troops had suffered a moral defeat which for the rest of the war must be regarded as irreparable; and that "the defeat of the Allies, with the subsequent surrender of France, . . . signifies to us, as well as to Great Britain, nothing but the final result of the war—final and irreparable". General Smuts, by the way, scornfully disposed of these conclusions of the Opposition leader as the delusions of a "hands-upper". At that stage in the session, however, they accorded too well with the Zeesen-soaked convictions of the men on General Herzog's side for General Smuts's reply to have much effect on the Opposition. But as the session went on and day after day passed without the cheerfully anticipated German invasion of Britain, as the British Air Force daily supplied its answer to General Herzog's announcement that Germany had shown and continued to show herself superior to Britain in the air, the Opposition's air of arrogant triumph in the prospect of German victory gave way to perplexity and the first signs of dismay. When the session ended, the remnant of the Opposition which had remained to see it out departed from Cape Town in a very perceptibly chastened state of mind.

The War Measures Bill, passed earlier in 1940, validated a number of Government actions in connection with the war. In its original form it contained an omnibus clause, giving the Government practically unlimited powers in the war sphere. There were objections to this clause on the ground that it went farther than there was any need for the Government to go. General Smuts deferred to these objections and withdrew the clause at that time. Meanwhile, however, there have been developments which showed that such an omnibus clause was necessary, for without it the Government was liable to be hampered in taking necessary steps. One of these steps was an order to all private individuals to surrender rifles in their possession. The Government, General Smuts told Parliament when he introduced the War Measures Amend-

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ment Bill, was short of rifles and could not get them abroad. The legislation passed earlier in the year did not include the power to commandeer rifles, so the Government made the necessary order under the Defence Act. Most of the rifles in the country were handed in under this order, but in some cases the legality of the order was contested and courts in various parts of the country gave conflicting decisions. The War Measures Amendment Act, including the omnibus clause, is retrospective and puts the legality of the commandeering order beyond doubt.

General Smuts, as Minister of Defence, admitted that no more unpopular act could be undertaken by any Government than commandeering rifles. The order was violently attacked by Opposition leaders and other Opposition members of Parliament, some of whom certainly encouraged refusal to surrender the rifles. They all asserted that the Government was getting the rifles in because it feared rebellion. But these inciters, when it came to the point, either handed in their own rifles or tamely asked permission from the Government to keep them—a concession which the Government wisely granted to one or two of the most prominent. In the result, the concession, and the fact that it had been asked for, were ruinous to the parliamentary case which the Opposition tried to make against the War Measures Amendment Bill. General Smuts also showed his wisdom by making another concession while the Amendment Bill was in committee. He had the rifles and could afford to be generous. The original commandeering order set a penalty of imprisonment without the option of a fine for failure or refusal to hand a rifle in. This was altered by the inclusion of a fine option, and the alteration was made retrospective.

But the rifle commandeering order was not the only Government justification for extending its powers by amending the War Measures Act. Two developments, both sinister, had occurred since the Act was passed earlier in the year. One was the growth of several organisations, nominally cultural, which are violently anti-Government in tendency. The

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Ossewa Brandwag (Ox-wagon Sentinel) is the chief of them. Its badge is a close copy of the Nazi badge, its organisation is on Nazi lines, and the Government is convinced that it is both Nazi-inspired and Nazi in its objects. The Minister of the Interior, Mr. Lawrence, produced one of what are alleged to be its swastika-decorated uniforms in the House during the debate on the War Measures Amendment Bill. The Opposition denies that the Ossewa Brandwag has anything to do with Nazism, but there is little doubt among people who are not politically biased that a Nazi tinge colours its objects and activities. The second development possibly necessitating increased Government powers was a sudden outbreak of sabotage, mainly in Johannesburg and in the Reef towns. There were a number of explosions, causing considerable damage and some casualties. Police action was prompt, however, even before the War Measures Act was passed in its amended form, and seems to have nipped this sinister and quite un-South-African growth in the bud.

III. THE BUDGET

AT the end of February Mr. Hofmeyr introduced his first budget, which provided for the appropriation of nearly £80 millions on revenue and loan account. This was a record amount for South Africa, yet it was apparent that the £14 millions he then proposed to allot to defence expenditure would not go far to equip and maintain South Africa's record expeditionary forces. Exactly five months later he introduced the second budget of the year. In this, defence expenditure for 1940-41 had mounted to £46 millions. Additional expenditure on internment camps and on assistance to farmers bring the total new appropriations up to just short of £33 millions.

There are three chief points on which budget criticism may fasten. The first is the allocation of expenditure. The second is the allocation as between revenue and loan accounts of the appropriations necessary to meet that expenditure.

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The third centres on the actual tax proposals. Despite its importance Mr. Hofmeyr's critics have not even discussed the second point. Of the £33 millions now additionally appropriated for war expenditure, £9·3 millions is to be spent from revenue and £23·6 millions from loan funds; an allocation which the Minister of Finance has justified on the grounds that much of it is of non-recurrent capital nature—as in the construction of coastal fortifications and aerodromes—and that some at least of that expenditure will not prove unproductive after the war. Moreover, £11·5 millions can be offset against the loan expenditure as a result of economies secured in other directions both in 1939-40 and in 1940-41 and as a result of the Treasury's profits on the sale of gold. Taking the war expenditure for the period from September 1939 to March 1941 as a whole, the allocation as between revenue and loans is in the proportion of 3 to 2.

For the most part Opposition critics have confined themselves to unconstructive complaints directed against war expenditure of any kind, while the official amendment to the budget proposals offered objections merely on grounds of an inequitable distribution of the burden of taxation. Many speakers, it is true, complained of some of the new taxes—in particular those on brandy and petrol—but this was only incidental to a spicier and less directly financial treatment of the subject. The irrelevance of most of the budget debate either to the terms of the Opposition amendment or to the real problems of public finance involved in paying for South Africa's war effort was unfortunate. It almost completely obscured discussion of an important point raised by Mr. Havenga when moving the amendment, to which he, at least, spoke with his customary lucidity.

The £9·3 millions additional expenditure from revenue is to involve only £4·8 millions of fresh taxation. The surplus for 1939-40 was in August estimated at over £1 million more than when the original budget was framed; over £1 million has been cut from the estimated expenditure on

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other votes; while revenue, on the basis of the taxation already existing, was now estimated to bring in nearly £3 million more than originally anticipated. The largest single item in this increase comes from the gold-mines; while it is of some interest that at least £250,000 has been contributed to the exchequer from profits on the coinage of silver necessitated by a hoarding campaign which was intended to embarrass the Government. The external trade of the Union has been surprisingly well maintained; and present indications suggest that Mr. Hofmeyr's upward revision of the revenue estimates is not over-optimistic.

In his first budget Mr. Hofmeyr had removed the 30 per cent. rebate which income-taxpayers had previously enjoyed. He had also substituted a special contribution of 9 per cent. of the gold-mines' taxable income in place of Mr. Havenga's arrangement by which the Government appropriated all profits from the sale of gold above 150s. per oz. The amount of this special contribution was fixed so as to leave the position of the mines substantially unchanged, though the removal of the rebate raised the income-tax payments of individuals by nearly 43 per cent. In the supplementary budget additional taxation is placed on motor spirit, tyres, cigarettes, liquor and yeast. Postage charges are increased. A surcharge of 20 per cent. is to be made on normal income-tax and super-tax, while the special contribution of the gold-mines is to be raised from 9 per cent. to 11 per cent.

Mr. Havenga protested bitterly that this was not preserving the relative positions of the different taxpayers; that, while the ordinary income-taxpayer suffered an increase of over 71 per cent. in his payments, the gold-mines had merely to pay an increase of some 22 per cent. upon a single element of their rather complicated contribution to the Exchequer—and one which was not a true element of taxation but merely a substitute for the direct appropriation by the State of the gold premium which it had created and to which it was entitled.

Mr. Hofmeyr had an obvious retort. He pointed out that,

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while it was more convenient to raise the amount of the special contribution, the sum levied was equivalent to an increase of 6d. in the pound in the standard rate of income-tax upon the mines, the same increase as he had imposed on other companies; while, if Mr. Havenga regarded the additional formula and the special contribution as devices for profit-sharing in the gold premium, he could not also in fairness claim that they should share in any changes in the rates of taxation. Yet it is obvious that Mr. Havenga's criticisms cannot be dismissed without further enquiry, though they might have appeared weightier had they been applied to the previous budget as well.

That is not the main point, however. It was evident from the speeches of the present and the late Ministers of Finance that there is a conflict of opinion and some confusion about the rational basis of our present system of raising funds from the gold-mines for the use of the State. This is a question which is likely to grow in importance with the continuation of heavy war expenditure; and it has important bearings on the part which the gold-mining industry can play in the Commonwealth's economic strategy of war and in the economy of the Union after war. It is a pity that questions of such importance, broached in informed discussions between past and present Ministers of Finance, should languish immediately in the barren wastes of South Africa's political discussions. The budget itself can be welcomed, as providing for a much greater financial war effort than once seemed possible and as indicating that this effort could be greatly expanded without creating undue strain. But the budget debate is merely another indication that South Africa's parliamentarians are not yet able to engage in dispassionate thought on such major questions as the proper relations between our great gold-mining industry and the State's finances.

South Africa,
October 1940.

AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIAN domestic politics in the last three months have shown us to be a community deeply united about ends but, for the time being, sharply divided about means. From the point of view of external affairs our politics have illustrated the Prime Minister's observation, eighteen months ago, that in the Pacific this country must regard itself as a principal, bearing primary responsibilities and facing primary risks.

I. AUSTRALIA IN THE PACIFIC

OPINION on the external affairs of a democracy is formed under many difficulties. The ordinary citizen seldom discovers the practical content of those smooth and rotund generalities in which (especially in critical times) the discussion of foreign policy is commonly carried on. They are quite unrelated in his mind to specific objectives, still less to specific policies by which such objectives may be attained. Even if he is aware that any given policy is the result of some correlation between his country's vital interests and the amount of force available at any given time for their protection, he must necessarily be ignorant—in time of war at any rate—about the military elements upon which policy is founded. Nevertheless Australians are beginning to discern the main outlines of the problems that now confront New Zealanders and themselves in the Pacific. The Nazi conquest of Holland and France, and Japan's prompt decision to press her interests towards the south, have brought the theatre of change almost to our doors. As an end of policy the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Pacific has become suddenly as obsolete as a hansom cab in New York. The question is now whether the direction and manner and extent of change will be com-

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patible with our own essential interests in this region, and what this country can itself contribute to making it so. Accordingly the public has watched with eager interest the Government's approaches towards the two most powerful nations in the North Pacific—towards the United States, the great bulwark of stability, and dynamic Japan, the storm-centre of change.

To Australia in mid-July came the new Minister from the United States, Mr. Clarence Gauss, the first foreign diplomat to be accredited to His Majesty's Government at Canberra, reciprocating the establishment of an Australian legation at Washington, under Mr. R. G. Casey. The arrival of Mr. Gauss was warmly and widely welcomed. Unused as we are here to direct diplomatic intercourse, we may have been inclined to read too much into his appointment. Perhaps we need to remind ourselves that, though diplomats are part of the machinery by which political and economic co-operation may be arranged, they do not by their mere presence constitute any guarantee of such co-operation. Nevertheless it is not fanciful to see in the establishment of an American legation at Canberra a symbol of the common interests that the English-speaking democracies have in the Pacific. From this point of view it is specially interesting that President Roosevelt has chosen for his first Minister here a man who has had already some twenty-five years' experience in the northern Pacific—in the Treaty Ports of China.

The news in early September that the Government of the United States had exchanged fifty destroyers for the lease of sites for naval bases in British territory adjacent to American waters has made a profound impression here. So bold a departure from the accepted notions of neutrality challenges the imagination. How far, we have been asking ourselves, could similar principles be applied in our own region? It is announced that Mr. Cordell Hull has been discussing defence arrangements in the Pacific with Lord Lothian and Mr. Casey. No details of these talks are as yet known to the public. Clearly any formal extension to the south-western Pacific of

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the defence arrangements of the United States would imply the assumption, on a scale far wider than ever before, of American interest in and responsibility for the state of affairs in the Pacific area as a whole. Such a step, if taken, would profoundly modify Australia's political and strategical position, not only during the present war but after it.

This article was drafted at the end of September—before the news came of the military pact between Japan and the Axis Powers. As it is being revised, the announcement is made that Britain intends to reopen the Burma road when the temporary agreement expires on October 15. As to what developments this may portend we can only speculate. But we are glad indeed to know that the policy of the British Commonwealth is being discussed point by point with the United States, and that Australia's own position and attitude will be understood at Washington.

Hard upon the arrival of Mr. Gauss followed the appointment of the Chief Justice of Australia, Sir John Latham, as Minister to Japan. His appointment has met with widespread and cordial approval. Minister for External Affairs, he led a diplomatic mission in 1934 to Japan and to other Eastern countries, and will have the initial advantage in his present task of first-hand knowledge of and of high repute in Japan. A man of great courage and strength of character, Sir John Latham has throughout a long career shown the very highest sense of public duty; not least in his willingness to undertake his present task. Parliament passed an amending Act to enable him to discharge the office of Minister to Japan for the duration of the war and a year thereafter without resigning his Chief Justiceship. The departure of the Minister designate has been postponed, in view of the confused political situation here, arising from the federal elections. The delay will give opportunities also for discussion of recent developments in the Far East. Australia has awaited with interest an announcement that the Japanese Government has made a reciprocal appointment.

* As already stated, the establishment of direct diplomatic

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relations with Washington and Tokyo is thought of here as the natural expression of the fact that in a region full of explosive possibilities this country faces "primary risks". Accordingly, in recent months there has been a strong desire expressed, particularly by members of the Opposition in the House of Representatives, that in the continuous consultation between Westminster and Canberra on foreign policy the Australian Government should not merely receive information but should put forward its own views of policy. The Minister for External Affairs dealt specifically with this particular point in the House not long ago. "I am able to give the most explicit assurance", he said, "not only that Australia is constantly and intimately in consultation with the United Kingdom Government and the Governments of the other Dominions who are concerned, but also that there is ample and recurring evidence that Australia's opinions weigh heavily and affect decisions made."

There is no disposition here to view the establishment of the new legations as anything like a gesture of independence or as a venture in isolationism. We hope the Australian Ministers will be a source of added strength to the representation of the British Commonwealth. How far the Australian temper is from isolationism may be judged from the extent of voluntary recruitment for overseas service. In the month that followed Italy's entry into the war, enlistments in the Australian Imperial Forces were no less than 41,000—a larger number than in any single month of the World War. When, in the middle of July, conditions abroad made it undesirable for the time being to send further troops overseas, and recruitment for the A.I.F. was temporarily suspended, there were nearly 80,000 men in camp in Australia. By numbering the divisions of the present Force consecutively after the five home-service divisions of the Citizen Forces, Australia has perhaps conveyed unintentionally to the uninitiated an exaggerated impression of her overseas forces. But, when recruiting was suspended, there had already been enlisted enough men to form an army corps of three divisions with corps troops and

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first reinforcements. To these must be added the men recruited for the Empire Air Scheme and a greatly expanded Navy. Indeed, so intense and anxious has been the gaze which the Australian people has fastened on events in Europe and Africa, and especially, of course, on the fortunes of the Battle of Britain, so many thousands of Australians have close personal attachments in the United Kingdom, that for most of us it is still the European conflict rather than Australia's rôle in the Pacific which forms the foreground of the war picture. It is primarily as a British Dominion that Australia faces the outside world.

The collapse of Holland and France has created defence problems not only for mainland Australia herself but in two islands relatively close by—New Guinea and New Caledonia. In the former we are responsible for the administration of two territories, both of which march on the west with Dutch New Guinea. The south-eastern part of the island, Papua, was declared a British protectorate in 1884, was administered by Queensland till 1905, with financial support from New South Wales and Victoria, and was then transferred to the Government of the Commonwealth. In effect it is an Australian Crown Colony. The north-eastern part of New Guinea, together with numerous more or less neighbouring islands, is administered by Australia as a "C" mandate from the League of Nations. For the defence of both territories this country is responsible. As regards the mandated territory, that responsibility must be exercised subject to the terms of the mandate itself. The military provisions are in the usual form:

The military training of the natives, otherwise than for purposes of internal police and the local defence of the territory, shall be prohibited. Furthermore, no military or naval bases shall be established or fortifications erected in the territory.

Apart from these important restrictions, Australia is given as mandatory "full powers of administration and legislation over the territory", so far as defence is concerned.

The Government recently gave attention to the defence arrangements of the two New Guinea territories. To both of

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them the Defence Act already applied, though the Act specifically excluded from the compulsory provisions, both as to military training and as to military service in time of war, the natives of the mandated territory. But for purposes of administration the two island territories stood outside the system of commands and districts into which mainland Australia and Tasmania are organised; indeed, they were separate from each other as well. Early in August, however, the Government decided to constitute the two of them as a new military district, to form an integral part of the Northern Command. This decision was promptly denounced by the Nazi press as "a gross breach of international law". The charge was baseless. The change was a purely administrative measure, and affected only the machinery through which policy is carried out. The defence of the mandated territory remains subject to the stipulations of the mandate. These stipulations do not fit very well the case of an isolated island territory, situated in a strategical position in relation to the mandatory power. But they are absolute. Fortunately for the natives themselves, Australia is under no obligation whatever, legal or moral, to refrain from maintaining bases and fortifications in the neighbouring territory of Papua.

The Nazi newspapers took the opportunity also to accuse Australia of having administered the mandated territory since 1920 "in violent contradiction of the mandate principle". No doubt this was an indirect assertion that Australia had failed to observe the "open door". The "C" mandates, however, unlike the "B", impose no such obligation. Apart from the specific safeguards laid down in the interests of the natives, the mandatory power is permitted to apply to the territory any or all of its own laws. But in any case Australia has not exercised to the full the powers of exclusive development allowed by the mandate. Broadly speaking, only a revenue tariff is in operation, and the territory has never been brought within the Australian protective system. As to administration generally, our record is available for the world's inspection, in the proceedings of the Permanent Mandates Commission.

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Since the discovery of gold in the territory, the local administration has been able to pay its own way, without subsidy from Australia, but the Government has scrupulously observed the principle that the revenues derived from the territory are a trust for the well-being of the territory itself. Indeed, the importance of maintaining this principle was one of the decisive factors which led a committee, appointed last year by the Australian Government to consider whether a combined administration of Papua and the mandated territory was possible and desirable, to advise against union.

The French colony of New Caledonia is of special importance to Australia, for the island lies only 800 miles north-eastwards from Brisbane. In hostile hands it could become dangerous as a base for operations against shipping, or even against the mainland. New Caledonia possesses large mineral deposits, particularly of nickel and chromium. Like most of the island colonies in the Pacific, New Caledonia depends absolutely for its livelihood on external trade; before the war the largest share was in French hands. Apart from the British Navy, the island was at the outbreak of war almost undefended.

The collapse of France raised some awkward problems. Both British and island interests imperatively required the maintenance of the *status quo*. On the other hand, the British Commonwealth could clearly not allow the island or its valuable mineral exports to fall into enemy hands. The Australian Government promptly sent Mr. B. C. Ballard, its representative in the Anglo-French condominium of the New Hebrides, to discuss the position with the Government of New Caledonia. An informal arrangement was reported, under which Australia was to supply the island with necessities such as coal and flour, and to purchase its mineral exports. In effect, the *status quo* was to be maintained. But from what little has become known it seems that Germany's ascendancy over the Government at Vichy imperilled its continuance. On September 20 the press announced that the French population of the island had received M. Sautot, who had arrived from the

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New Hebrides with a commission as Governor from General de Gaulle; had peacefully overthrown the government responsible to Vichy; and had declared in favour of Free France and the British cause. Later, it was reported that economic co-operation would continue between New Caledonia and Australia. To have the island in friendly hands will be a great relief to this country.

II. THE FEDERAL ELECTIONS

IN accordance with normal practice and the requirements of the Constitution, elections for the House of Representatives and for half the Senate were held on September 21. The electors held widely differing views about the decision to hold an election at all at the present juncture. Some felt it distasteful, almost disgraceful, to have to cast a party vote in the midst of a deepening crisis that called imperatively for unity. Many merely found it impossible, with the air attacks on Britain filling their minds, to take any active interest in the wordy contest at home. The plain fact, however, was that the life of the existing House of Representatives could not legally be prolonged beyond November 30, 1940, unless there were sufficient consent among all parties to induce the Parliament at Westminster, on request from Australia, to exercise its supreme but nowadays latent power, and pass an enabling Act.* A rigid Constitution prescribes that each House of Representatives shall continue for three years from its first meeting and no longer. The Constitution could of course be altered, but only by a referendum which would have been slow and costly and in any case had no chance of affirmative result. It appears that the Cabinet had at one stage resolved to ask the House to support a request to the Parliament of the United Kingdom for an amending Act which would enable the Parliament of the Commonwealth (like the Parliament of the United Kingdom itself) to prolong its own life, when the time came, if it thought fit. The Labour party had already

* See also *THE ROUND TABLE*, No. 120, September, 1940, p. 918.

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made plain that it was opposed to a postponement of the elections, though this particular proposal had apparently not been before it. Before Parliament met, however, the Deputy Prime Minister and leader of the Country party, Mr. Cameron, astonished his Cabinet colleagues and the country by a public declaration of hostility to any postponement. The election was duly held, after a short campaign. The Labour party, it may be remarked, had taken its stand partly on the ground that to request an amending Act at Westminster would be inconsistent with the constitutional status of Australia as an equal Dominion, possessing its own powers of constitutional change; but its policy was based mainly on its conviction that the composite Government had ceased to enjoy the support of the country and that the electors would return Labour with a mandate to govern. Perhaps Australia has been unwarrantably lucky to be able to hold an election at all in such a month. But now that it is safely over, no democrat can be sorry that, at a stage of great uncertainty, the electorate had its chance to speak. Nor are its wishes by any means so obscure as the closeness of the contest might seem to indicate.

There are 74 full members in the House of Representatives, the member for the Northern Territory having no vote. The United Australia party (U.A.P.) had held 25 seats, the Country party 17, the Labour parties 32 in all. At the dissolution, four seats in Victoria were vacant—three of them as a result of a disastrous aircraft accident in which the Minister of the Army, the Minister for Air and the Assistant Minister for Information, together with the Chief of the General Staff and six others, all lost their lives. In the House of Representatives the two Government parties had thus had 42 seats in a House of 74; a clear majority of 10. For even the barest win, Labour had to win at least 6 seats.

The Senate consists of 36 members, elected for six years, one-half retiring every three years. Owing to the recent occurrence of a casual vacancy, 19 Senators were to be elected. In the Senate as a whole the U.A.P. and the Labour party each held 16 seats, the Country party 4. For the Senate each State

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votes as a single constituency, and the system of voting for the Senate was expressly intended to produce block or panel representation. The result is, unless there is a great deal of cross-voting, that the three seats in the State at any election will all go to the party which has a majority, however small. Accordingly, the Senate is peculiarly liable to drastic changes. If the electorate moves in the same general direction on two consecutive occasions, the Senate will belong wholly or almost wholly to the one party. In 1937 the tide was moving against the Government, and of the 17 Senators who were not due to retire this year, 14 belonged to the Labour party and 3 to the U.A.P. Of the 19 retiring Senators, on the other hand, 13 belonged to the U.A.P., 4 to the Country party, and 2 to Labour. In the Senate, therefore, Labour had to win 5 seats to command a bare majority. Owing to the peculiar electoral system already described, this meant in effect that Labour must secure a majority in two out of the six States.

There was a record number of candidates—273 for the House, and 65 for the Senate. In New South Wales three distinct and contending Labour organisations endorsed their own candidates: the Australian Labour party, the Labour party (Non-Communist) and the New South Wales Labour party. The A.L.P. needs little explanation. It is the Labour party properly so called, an all-Australian organisation with State branches, led by Mr. Curtin, the Leader of the Opposition in the House. The "Labour party (Non-Communist)" had its origin in 1931, when a small group of federal members representing constituencies in New South Wales broke away, under the leadership of Mr. J. A. Beasley, from a Labour Government led by Mr. Scullin, and declared their loyalty to the then more extreme policies advocated by Mr. J. T. Lang, the Labour leader in State politics. As the "Lang Labour" group they have preserved a quasi-independent identity ever since. They held 5 seats in the House at the last dissolution. Their present title is a product of the conflicts in Labour circles in New South Wales out of which the third party has grown. The official policy of the A.L.P., since the war began, has

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moved rapidly in favour of full support of Britain. Last Easter, however, under the influence of groups on the extreme Left, a State conference of the A.L.P. in New South Wales passed resolutions against the continuance of hostilities. In August the executive of the A.L.P. took the drastic step of suspending the whole of the State executive of the party in New South Wales. The State executive, however, refused to submit and, under the title of "New South Wales Labour party", nominated candidates in a number of seats. In the largest industrial State, therefore, Labour went to the polls still disunited. The Government and its supporters naturally contended that these internal divisions showed Labour unready to assume the responsibilities of government. But the distribution of preference votes has shown that, as often in the past, acute internal divisions have been consistent with a high degree of loyalty to the Labour interest as a whole.

Despite the usual side-issues, the main issue at the election was simple and well understood. It was whether Mr. Menzies and his parties or Mr. Curtin and the Labour parties should be entrusted with the responsibility of organising an "all-in" war effort. About the need for such an effort the whole nation showed itself united. Only the New South Wales Labour party contested this, and they did not win a single seat. The A.L.P. has won a seat from Mr. Beasley's group; and it is perhaps significant that, whereas Mr. Curtin's party almost to a man supported in June the grant of wide additional powers to the Government, Mr. Beasley's party did not.

At the hustings Government speakers taunted Labour with its disunity, its tardy acceptance of the need for sending armed assistance overseas, its promises of the maximum of war effort at the minimum sacrifice of prosperity, its unwillingness to abandon the party game and enter a national government. On the positive side, the Government relied on the magnitude of the war organisation it had created and directed. The Prime Minister promised nothing, except vigorous prosecution of the war and all-round sacrifice.

Labour speakers in their turn charged the Government with

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half-heartedness, vacillation and inefficiency in its administration. They denounced the place assigned in the Government's organisation of the financial and productive side of war planning to leading representatives of great business interests. On the positive side, they had, of course, no record to point to. Instead, they emphasised the likelihood that the Parliament now to be elected would have to grapple with the problems of the peace as well as of the war. They contended that for the inevitable large-scale social reconstruction the country needed a broadly based popular Government, pledged to use the entire financial resources of the people in the task.

The refusal of the A.L.P., before the elections, to enter the Ministry may perhaps require some further explanation. The Prime Minister in July offered Mr. Curtin five or six seats, including a new Ministry of Labour, in a reconstructed Cabinet. The offer was made on the distinct understanding that there should be no compromise on the policy which the present Government was following. The invitation was firmly declined. At this stage Mr. Curtin felt himself bound by a declaration of policy made by an A.L.P. conference in June. But, some time earlier, he had said that deep-seated differences of principle made impossible Labour's entry into the Cabinet. It is not difficult to identify some of these differences—the proper limits of free speech, the use of the taxing power, the control of monetary policy, and so forth. As soon as any one of these issues arose, the Labour members of an all-party Ministry would be faced with the choice of splitting either the Cabinet or the Labour movement. Probably also Mr. Curtin was influenced by the considerations about the future which appear in his policy speech. He seems to have felt that only by preserving its separate identity could the Labour movement be prepared to assume responsibility for the ultimate work of social reconstruction. Meantime the party could do its best work by remaining as an Opposition, critical but not obstructive.

In conference in June the Labour party offered, instead of an all-party Ministry, co-operation in an all-party National

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War Council, advisory in character. This proposal was rejected by the Government, on the ground chiefly that advice from such a council could not be useful unless it had knowledge available only to Cabinet ministers.

The election was very closely contested. Many seats were decided only on the count of preferences, and for almost a fortnight after the polls it was doubtful whether the Government or the Opposition would have a majority. In the new House the state of parties will be:

Government parties—United Australia party and United Country party.	37
Independent Country party	1
	—
*Labour parties	36
	74

Labour has thus made a net gain of 4 seats. The Government parties lost a seat in Queensland and in Victoria, but gained 2 in Tasmania and 1 in South Australia. In New South Wales Labour gained 5 seats. After excluding the Speaker, the Menzies Government's nominal majority of 1 will consist of a Country party member who belongs to an independent group and who has given only intermittent support hitherto.

In the Senate the count is incomplete, but it appears certain that the Government parties will secure the return of their 13 retiring members, and will capture from Labour the fourth Victorian seat. The Government will thus have a majority of 2 in the Senate. In New South Wales the Opposition forces seem to have had a majority of about 12 per cent. of votes cast; in every other State the Government had a majority of about the same order.

Taking the figures as a whole, it is clear that the Government more than maintained its ground in all States except New South Wales, where there was a strong swing towards Labour. This divergence demands some explanation, but the task is not easy. Possibly the unhappy quarrel in State politics

* Since the election the Labour Member for Kalgoorlie has died, thus temporarily, in any event, reducing the number of Labour members to 35.

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last year, which led to the resignation from the House of the then Premier, Mr. Stevens, has had a lasting effect in depressing the prestige of the Government parties. Another factor is one that has always potentially operated—a proneness to radicalism which New South Wales has often shared with Queensland. Whether or not it will operate decisively in any given instance may well depend on other factors not in themselves nearly so significant. Such factors seem to have been present at this election. One was that all sections of the Sydney press, for some time and at frequent intervals, had been castigating the Government for the imperfections of its administration. This gave the Labour spokesmen splendid material for their attack when the election campaign opened. Another element, which has appeared in various ways both before and since the election, was an apparently widespread feeling in New South Wales that the present Government is under Melbourne domination and that New South Wales interests were suffering and would continue to suffer, especially in the allocation of defence contracts. In part this feeling may perhaps account also for the marked lack of enthusiasm in New South Wales for the Prime Minister personally which has frequently been noted. The Government has also been attacked a good deal of late for having centred so much of the war administration in Melbourne and deserting the national capital at Canberra. Such considerations are seldom coherently worked out; but they are apt to create a condition of irritation which, electorally, may become very important. Whether the facts are as imagined is not at the moment the point; the important thing is the voter's frame of mind.

There will be some interesting new-comers to the House, including Dr. H. V. Evatt, who attracted a great deal of attention by resigning from the High Court Bench to contest the Sydney constituency of Barton in the Labour interest. Such an action was unprecedented in Australian politics; South Africans may recall the case of Mr. Tielman Roos.

The Prime Minister had a personal triumph in his own constituency of Kooyong. Despite a large field of candidates,

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some of them with a strong local following, he increased by more than 12,000 the first-preference votes he polled in 1937. Democracy is not always generous in recognition of those who bear its heaviest burdens. Australia has not produced a Churchill, but Mr. Menzies has given to a country at war leadership distinguished for its dignity and its moderation.

Before the polls both sides asked for a sweeping victory, to make strong government possible. But the country has emphatically denied it to both. Perhaps the strongest reason felt for returning the present Government was that it gave some hope of an all-party administration in the sequel, whereas a mandate to Labour would have put that prospect out of practical politics. Since the results of the elections became clear, the Prime Minister has held conferences with the leaders of the other parties to discuss the possibility of a National Government. The immediate outlook does not seem at all favourable for such a development. The whole question will be discussed at further conferences of each of the parties before the new Parliament meets. Just at the moment, all is inconclusive.

Australia,
October 1940.

NEW ZEALAND

I. THE WAR CABINET

ON July 17, 1940, the Prime Minister announced the formation of a War Cabinet of five consisting of himself, Mr. Walter Nash, Minister of Finance, Mr. F. Jones, Minister of Defence, Mr. Adam Hamilton, Leader of the Opposition, and Mr. J. G. Coates, one of the former leaders of the Coalition Government, to take supreme control of New Zealand's war effort. Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Coates are without portfolios, but draw the salaries of Ministers. This, apparently, represented the length to which his party would allow Mr. Fraser to go, and at the time it appeased, rather than satisfied, the public demand for a National all-in Government. The Opposition Caucus debated the question whether the position demanded a new Leader, and decided that Mr. Hamilton should continue to act in the dual capacity. The country is in the unprecedented situation of having its affairs administered by two Cabinets both presided over by the same chairman. One of their difficulties will be to decide what, in a given action, is concerned with the war effort, and consequently by which Cabinet it is to be controlled. The likely matter in issue is finance, the budget comprising two distinct components, a domestic programme and a war programme. So far little publicity has been given to the doings of the War Cabinet, and, beyond seeing a few slight references in the press to the fact of its meeting regularly, the man in the street is hardly cognizant of its existence. In the meantime the public are puzzled to hear on the broadcast of Parliamentary proceedings and to read in their newspapers of the two National party members criticizing with all their former enthusiasm their colleagues in the War Cabinet on general political subjects. No doubt, behind the scenes solid work is being done in an atmosphere of goodwill engendered by an overwhelming desire to assist in the Empire's

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cause. But Labour, on the whole, ranges from lukewarm to cold at the change. Resolutions passed by several branches of the large trade unions, seemingly inspired from some common source, have thrown at the Labour Cabinet suggestions to recast its decision and to ask the two National party members to withdraw. The Advisory War Council as distinct from the War Cabinet* functioned for a time, although the two vacancies left for National party representatives were not filled. It still lives, but its breathing after that stertorous spasm is hardly noticeable.

II. THE FORCES

WHEN war broke out the New Zealand Division of the Royal Navy passed under control of the Admiralty and as part of the Atlantic Fleet the *Achilles* took her share in the River Plate action against the *Graf Spee*. In the early period no further assistance was asked beyond keeping the ships of the division fully manned and, as far as the material resources of the Dominion could extend, fully equipped. This, however, called for an increase in naval personnel from 82 officers and 1,257 men to 211 officers and 2,429 men. During the past few months, however, the Admiralty, much to the delight of the members of the various yacht clubs in New Zealand, has accepted the services of cadets for the Fleet Air Arm and of officers and ratings to reinforce the Fleet who are to-day in training in England or helping to man some of His Majesty's ships.

The Minister of Defence in a recent speech at Dunedin stated that, when New Zealand reaches its maximum contribution under the Empire Air Scheme, it will be sending each year a total of nearly 3,000 pilots, gunners and observers to the United Kingdom and Canada. The first observers and air gunners to go to Canada from here to complete their training will leave next month.

About the beginning of next year we shall start sending pilots to Canada for advanced training, but in the meantime we shall

* See THE ROUND TABLE, No. 120, September 1940, p. 945.

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continue to send pilots direct to England under the air training scheme which was in operation before the Empire scheme was announced.

When the Empire scheme is in full operation, however, our annual commitment will be 880 pilots trained in New Zealand to an advanced stage and sent direct to England, 520 pilots sent to Canada for further training, and 546 air observers and 936 air gunners sent to Canada. Thus we shall be sending abroad each year nearly 3,000 men, exclusive of certain technical personnel of whom a number will be sent next year.

It is difficult to say exactly how soon it will be possible to reach these figures, since that is determined by a number of factors, one of which is equipment, which has to be obtained from abroad. That is the aim, however, and when it is reached, New Zealand, in common with other Empire countries, will be making a great contribution to the winning of the war in the air. Between now and the end of this year New Zealand will send to the United Kingdom 167 pilots, 117 observers and 40 air gunners, and to Canada 126 observers and 288 air gunners. The total number of airmen sent to the United Kingdom and to Canada during this year, including those who have already gone forward, will be 1,465. At the present time there are approximately 1,000 New Zealanders serving in the Royal Air Force in England. As a consequence, we have been obliged to increase the establishment of the Royal New Zealand Air Force itself. Thus, while twelve months ago the strength of the force was 100 officers and 608 airmen, including trainees, we now have 382 officers and 4,748 airmen, including trainees, which represents a very large increase for a year. When we have our total establishment, it will amount to 480 officers, 4,200 airmen and 1,800 trainees, so that at any one time we should have at the Air Force stations in New Zealand some 6,450 officers and men.

As far as the Army is concerned, altogether 23,000 soldiers, including railway and forestry units, have been sent overseas or are in training, and enlistments up to the closing of the voluntary system on July 22 have totalled more than 65,000.

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The Territorial units and Military Reserve are also in training, and the final class of man-power is being organised, having been christened the "Home Guard".

The Women's War Service Auxiliary is also making its first appearance under the aegis of its own district and local committees, with a comprehensive syllabus of work corresponding to that of its sister service in England.

III. ENEMY ALIENS

TO deal with the problem of the Fifth Column the Attorney-General, under the Emergency Regulations governing the subject, has set up a Tribunal consisting of a judge of the Supreme Court, a King's Counsel and a prominent member of the Trade Union organisation to advise what action should be taken with regard to the 2,341 registered enemy aliens in New Zealand. The Tribunal's powers are limited to making recommendations, and it has been said that it ought to be allowed to act upon its own judgments. But the right to intern enemy aliens as prisoners of war, without making any explanation or giving any reason, is a prerogative right vested in all states by international law, and as such should certainly be exercised by the Executive itself. The Tribunal has sat since the beginning of August and, as a result of the experience gained, the Attorney-General has decided to appoint alien authorities in the fifteen police districts in the Dominion to deal with these aliens in the first instance, the recommendations of such authorities to be subject to review by the existing Tribunal either on the motion of the police, the alien, or the Attorney-General himself.

IV. THE BUDGET

THE budget, briefly mentioned in the September issue of **THE ROUND TABLE**, can now be viewed in truer perspective. It may be said at once that its effects are profound and

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that it reveals the extent to which the process of socialisation has already gone in New Zealand. It superimposes a war programme upon an intensified domestic programme. There is, admittedly, but little attempt to substitute a war for a peace-time budget. The Government has been courageously struggling to retain the present standard of living of those on the lower wage level and, since the taxation of the so-called wealthy (in fact there are very few wealthy people in New Zealand) has now reached saturation point, the worker is being further taxed to preserve his own amenities of life. Out of a total budget of £102 millions, £37½ millions goes to carrying on the war and the balance, £64½ millions, to winning the domestic argument. Thus £13 millions is allotted to Social Security, £18 millions to National Development and £33½ millions to Ordinary Expenditure. Of the huge total revenue, £54 millions will be raised by taxation, £10 millions in various other ways and £38 millions by borrowing and creating money. "We propose to create funds to enable us to meet all our commitments as we go along in excess of the sum we can borrow", said the Minister of Finance in his budget speech on July 17. At the same time the Minister fully realises the dangers of inflation, and on several occasions he has warned the country against excessive indulgence in practices that will be likely to occasion it. Of that £38 millions, £19½ millions has been made available to New Zealand by the British Government for overseas war expenditure at the same rate of interest as it will pay on its own loans; the rest must be produced in the Dominion by loan or creation.

In order to carry this heavy load of taxation Mr. Nash has been obliged to add to his human transport. The worker, and we are all workers in New Zealand, is now burdened with a further tax of 1s. in the pound of wages and salaries and earnings, such tax to be called the National Security Tax in contradistinction to the Social Security Tax of a similar amount already imposed. The rentier and annuitant will pay the same tax on their incomes. For the first time also, the State Trading Departments are called upon to pay income tax. These two

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additions show how, in communities where the State undertakes the spending of its people's earnings rather than leaving it to the people to disburse them as they please, the worker must ultimately contribute to the pool to an ever-increasing extent. His numbers prevent him from escaping. That this is so is clearly shown in the *Abstract of Statistics* for June 1940:

An average income of £253 was earned by males in New Zealand aged 16 years and over, during the year ended March 31, 1939. More than 42 per cent. of the persons whose returns were studied earned between £200 and £349 a year. The figures were compiled from the Social Security declarations. Many declarations were received late and the number of returns available for tabulation was 451,829. All these returns were furnished by males, declarations from females not yet having been tabulated. Of the 451,829 returns tabulated, 431,191 males showed an aggregate income of £114,637,376. A further 18,500 had no income, while 2,138 recorded losses outweighing their receipts for the year. The average net loss was £176 a head.

Omitting persons with no income or with a net loss of income, the total income of £114,637,376 was derived from income levels as follows:

£	per cent.	£	per cent.
Under 150 . . .	8.5	400-499 . . .	8.3
150-199 . . .	7.9	500-749 . . .	9.5
200-249 . . .	13.2	750-999 . . .	4.5
250-299 . . .	16.9	1,000-1,999 . . .	6.6
300-349 . . .	12.3	2,000 or over . . .	4.7
350-399 . . .	7.6		

Among the 451,829 returns tabulated, the largest group came in the £260 to £285 a year class, a total of 39,310 making up this section. A total of 19 persons had total incomes of between £10,000 and £14,999 a year while seven had from £15,000 to £19,999. Four had incomes of £20,000 or over, their total incomes being £95,000.

The aggregate private incomes for the year ended March 31, 1939, was £185,500,000 against £173,000,000 in the previous year, and £157,300,000 in 1936-37. In 1934-35 the total was £106,400,000. While the aggregate private income has risen by £12,500,000 the value of production has fallen by £300,000.

The budget further indicates the extent to which the policy of the Government has, in the first place, decreased the capa-

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city of the New Zealander to save out of his income, and, secondly, narrowed the field of investment available to him for such capital as he may be able to accumulate. The Social Security Tax in 1939-40 provided the Government with over £9½ millions and the receipts from that and from the National Security Tax are respectively estimated to produce in 1940-41 £9 millions and £6 millions, the latter amount being for a portion only of the financial year. These large deductions from income may, it is thought, in the future reduce the total of life-insurance premiums, of friendly-society contributions, and of payments to building societies. On March 31, 1937, the total funds of the friendly societies amounted to £5,120,000, having increased from £1,367,000 in 1910, while the deposits in building societies aggregated £3,347,000. It would seem that opportunity for adding to this form of capital must of necessity be diminished. Mr. Nash himself is closing the building-society avenue by restricting the amount of deposits each society may accept to that existing last year. As to narrowing the field of investment, in pursuance of the housing policy of the Government £11,559,000 has been expended on building dwellings since its inception until March 31 last, being the equivalent of capital that was formerly provided by the private investor, and the Dairy Marketing policy of the Government has withdrawn an investment of over £3 millions from the Trading Banks. If the Government finds that through the exigencies of war it must acquire to some extent the overseas investments of New Zealanders, of which a register has been compiled, the State will become to that extent a lender. For the purpose of the register overseas investors were required to make returns of their investments overseas. They had also to state their claims to, and holdings of, foreign currency and to place the latter at the disposal of the Government. An overseas investor is at present not allowed to spend, say, in Australia his credit balance at a bank there, although he may repatriate it if he can obtain leave from the Australian authorities, which is not readily granted. Nor will the New Zealand Government at present take over his balance in Australia and pay him the

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corresponding amount in New Zealand currency. The result is the freezing of foreign currency against New Zealanders. In so far, also, as the Government's many incursions into trade and industry go, those fields are closed to the citizen seeking to invest his savings. Some of these fields are saw-milling, marketing of primary products (fruits, cereals and dairy produce), transport (road and air) and farming. The acreage of land in New Zealand actually farmed by the Government, including Maori land, is very large. Doubtless some explanation of the large amount invested by New Zealanders in overseas securities can be gathered from these facts.

The increase in Treasury Bills outstanding at March 31, 1940, was £8,880,000, the total amount outstanding at that date being £25,405,000. The net increase in the long-term debt in the year ending March 31, 1940, was £9,047,009; the gross increase was £12,918,897 and the redemptions £3,871,888.

Another fundamental feature of the budget is the reliance placed upon capital expenditure to find employment for the workless. Under the pressure of debate the Prime Minister asserted that unless £20 millions were spent on public works 12,000 men must starve. This was probably a rhetorical calculation, but a recollection of Ramsay MacDonald's attempt to cure unemployment by using capital attaches to the statement a somewhat grim innuendo.

The worker, who by means of his highly organised trade unions, with their centralised control in Wellington, makes himself impressively articulate, has not taken kindly to the increased taxation in the shape of the extra 1s. in the pound, the increased sales tax and increased income tax. The resolutions that demanded the dismissal of Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Coates from the War Cabinet also protested most vigorously against the Government's imposing the further 1s. in the pound tax. Coming as they do from branches of the larger unions they cannot be ignored, and Mr. J. A. Lee, who has now successfully launched his Democratic Labour party, is taking full advantage of the situation. In his paper *John A. Lee's Weekly* he preaches the lack of necessity for such taxation. The in-

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crease in the family allowance to men earning £4 or £5 a week does not seem to have lessened the hostility to this tax. A specimen of these resolutions is that passed by the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants at Otahuhu:

That the Otahuhu Branch, representing 1,000 railwaymen, records the opinion that the Government's present administration is not in the interests of the workers of New Zealand. We therefore demand:

- (1) That owing to statements made by manufacturers, wholesalers and so on that the cost of living will further increase, a rise of at least 10s. a week be given.
- (2) That the Government take immediate steps to see that real wages are not in future negated by the rise in the cost of living.
- (3) That the conscription of wealth, including all profits and all incomes over £500, be instituted.
- (4) That the 1s. in the pound taxation be removed and the Federation of Labour proposals substituted.
- (5) That the Rt. Hon. J. G. Coates and the Hon. Adam Hamilton be removed from the War Cabinet.
- (6) That all subsidies to vested interests be stopped.

Mr. Fraser, commenting on this resolution, refused to accept it as representing the considered opinions of 1,000 men—let alone a majority of railway workers. It is much more likely, he said, that the demands for a wage increase of 10s. a week and for governmental protection against future increases in living costs, as well as for the "conscription" of all profits and all incomes above £500 a year, and the abolition of the War Cabinet, have emanated from a "small group of irresponsibles—or worse".

The Government has taken power to levy a compulsory loan without interest, which if exercised will still further add to the amount of Government securities. In the meantime the Government is leaning heavily upon the Reserve Bank. On September 9, 1940, the advances to the Government by the Bank, apart from the Dairy Marketing advances, totalled £23,540,000, and the Bank's note issue had reached the high level of £19,998,630. There is, however, a good deal of capital available in the Dominion for investment as is shown by the Trading Banks' returns at the end of July. The excess of

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deposits over advances as at the end of July for the past three years was as follows:

	£
1938	10,874,119
1939	12,577,399
1940	33,066,437

This startling increase is doubtless due in some measure to the presence of created money and also to trading stocks being liquidated and not replaced owing to import restrictions.

V. INCREASE IN AWARD WAGES

SINCE the last issue of THE ROUND TABLE the Court of Arbitration under the presidency of its new Judge, Mr. Justice Tyndall, has made an order increasing all award wages by 5 per cent. from August 12, 1940. The increase has not completely satisfied the trade unions. Indeed, the Minister for Health at Christchurch, in deplored the ingratitude of those within Labour's ranks "who crucify us for one mistake and forget all the good things we have done", appealed against that injustice by saying, "Now that the Arbitration Court has given an additional 5 per cent., yet some say we are no better than the Tories." Following upon this increase in award wages the Government has granted a cost-of-living allowance to the lower paid state employees, to be retrospective to the date of the general order of the Court of Arbitration. It will take the form of a flat allowance of 5s. a week to all state employees of 18 years of age and over in receipt of salaries not exceeding £335 a year, or its equivalent in weekly wages or hourly rates. This will apply to all members of the general public service, the railways, the Post and Telegraph Department, teachers, police, employees of the Public Works Department and similar classes of employees in the state services.

In the meantime, the dairy farmers are moved, amongst other things, by the wages increase to press for an increase in the guaranteed price of their produce. That they have some moral support for their request is found in the fact that the

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1938 price was retained in 1939, although costs had gone up in the year, and Mr. Nash in imposing that situation upon them led them to think he hoped to stabilise costs in New Zealand. They also can urge the further rise in costs since 1939.

That inaudible class, comprising the pensioner, the superannuant and the retired man or woman living upon his or her savings attracts no attention in this discussion.

VI. ECONOMIC CONFERENCE

FOllowing on this increase in wages, but perhaps not entirely because of it, the Government has called an Economic Conference to consider the possibility of stabilising costs, prices and wages and to discuss expanding production so that the strain of war expenditure may be successfully borne and the standard of living maintained as far as possible. This Conference, opened on September 5 by addresses from the Prime Minister and Mr. Nash, was attended by some forty-four delegates besides Ministers of the Crown and the two National party members of the War Cabinet. The interests represented were the Farmers' Union, Sheep-owners' Federation, Dairy Industry Council, Manufacturers' Federation, Employers' Federation, Associated Chambers of Commerce, Ship-owners' Federation, Coalmine Owners' Federation, Federation of Labour, various Trade Unions and the Bank of New Zealand.

Mr. Fraser succinctly stated the situation confronting the Dominion :

It appears from some figures—and these and any other information will be made available to delegates—that the value of goods which are available for consumption in New Zealand has fallen from about £133,000,000 last year to about £114,000,000. On the face of it, this means a decrease in the general standard of living, but the conference must examine how this decrease is accounted for and what types of goods have been cut down. Have they been luxury items or goods for every-day use: goods for consumers or goods for capital purposes? While the question of the living standard is, in total, entirely dependent on the amount of goods available, the standard for the individual is a question of what he can get out of the general

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pool of goods and services. This is a question of distribution and is dependent on incomes and prices. Though the total of goods and services for civil use has decreased by some 14 per cent., the amount of money that is available for spending by individuals, after taking into account increased taxes, is still about the same this year as it was last. A situation like this no doubt means that prices must tend to increase with the increased pressure of purchasing power on goods to be bought. That, I believe, is the situation with which we are faced to-day.

Mr. Nash, in the course of his address, submitted the following table showing the rise in wholesale prices from June 1939 to June 1940:

		<i>Consumers' Goods</i>		
		<i>Food</i>	<i>Non-food</i>	<i>Combined</i>
June 1939	.	1,073	984	1,035
June 1940	.	1,143	1,118	1,132
			<i>Producers' Materials</i>	
			<i>Builders</i>	<i>Others</i>
June 1939	.	1,202	1,041	1,076
June 1940	.	1,351	1,187	1,223
<i>Wholesale—Total Groups</i>				
		<i>Imported</i>	<i>Locally produced</i>	<i>All groups</i>
June 1939	.	1,069	1,043	1,058
June 1940	.	1,249	1,089	1,182

These increases in wholesale prices would perhaps not immediately be shown in retail prices, he said, and perhaps not to the same extent, but it should be noted that they entered into costs. The basis for the statistics was the five-year period, 1926-30, = 1,000.

Both the Prime Minister and Mr. Nash admitted for the first time that our standard of living must be reduced, and asked the Conference to advise the Government how the sacrifice could most fairly be borne. As is usual with conferences of such nature, a Committee was set up to find the answer. It consisted of seven employers and seven workers under the chairmanship of Mr. Nash and the deputy chairmanship of Mr. A. T. Donnelly, the popular Chairman of the Bank of New Zealand. In the meantime the Conference stands adjourned until the Committee is ready to present its report.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

VII. INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

TO deplore trends in national life is idle, and the wise historian contents himself with stating events as they occur with such accuracy and explanatory comment as he can command. The loss of sterling funds and the succeeding "import selection" policy have forced New Zealand, just as the depression forced Australia, to increase her local manufactures. To what extent, if at all, this will injure our best friend and customer, the Mother Country, time alone will show, but the Minister of Industries and Commerce finds in it some satisfaction. In a message to the *Taranaki Herald* (August 31, 1940) he said:

The steady development that has taken place in manufacturing in New Zealand, particularly during the past five years, has been very satisfactory. From April 1, 1935, to April 1, 1940, no fewer than 724 new factories commenced operations in the Dominion. These units have provided gainful employment for 5,818 males and for 3,526 women and girls. The industries established are classified under 140 or more headings, and in arriving at the total, consideration was given only to those industries which, from the nature of their production or from the measure of employment they provide, can be classified as major developments. If the large number of small units established was included, the aggregate totals would be much higher. The establishment of new manufacturing units has followed population trends, Auckland taking first place with 297 factories and 4,145 additional employees; Wellington follows with 275 factories and 3,820 operatives; Christchurch 100 and 1,086 respectively; and Dunedin 52 and 293. While Dunedin has not shared so well in all this development the number of units in that city and the number of operatives is greater than ever before.

For industry to function, it is necessary that capital should be invested, and this investment implies confidence in the future of the Dominion. It is pleasing, therefore, to note that many oversea concerns have seen fit to establish factories in this country. No accurate figures are available to show the capital involved, but the figures released by some concerns have been £75,000, £50,000, £30,000, £25,000 and so on. This inflow of overseas capital may be taken as an expression of confidence.

So far as industry in general is concerned, I have received reports from the four main centres. In one thing they all agree—that still

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further expansion in production is retarded by a shortage of skilled labour in some directions. Men have been taken from Scheme 13 and trained; women and girls, youths and boys, have been added to the pay-rolls for training, but the demand still exists, Dunedin being the only place where the supply is sufficient. Raw materials have been maintained in fairly good supply though there have been unavoidable delays in delivery due to shipping factors beyond our control. The general trend of all the reports is satisfactory. Manufacturing in the Dominion is coming into its own and is proving itself capable of supplying the public with goods and services high in quality and reasonable in price. That there are problems and difficulties no one denies, but despite them, progress is still being maintained, new developments are still taking place. The Factory Controller and the Officers of the Department of Industries and Commerce are sparing no effort to ensure that there will be a continuity of supply of raw materials, and an unceasing watch is being kept for new sources of supply where erstwhile sources have been curtailed or cut off.

Due to all the expansion that has taken place in industry our people have access to a wider range of goods and services than might otherwise be the case under existing circumstances. The demand exceeds the supply at the moment, but our manufacturers are doing wonderful work in catching up the leeway.

In the meantime, thanks to the "Old Lady", our exports for July totalled £5,029,000 compared with £3,597,000 in July 1939, and for the first seven months of the year amounted to £49,661,000 compared with £40,379,000 for the corresponding period of the previous year.

New Zealand,
September 1940.

